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The Week

THE International Chamber of Commerce, in convention in Rome, has performed a signal service by passing the resolution of the American delegates calling for a conference of business men from all the leading countries to study ways and means for solving Europe's financial and economic troubles. While the consent of the governments would of course be necessary, such a conference would not be "official" in the bad—which is to say, the political—sense. The subjects on the agenda, reparations, inter-allied debts, government budgets, international credits and currency fluctuations, would be studied in an atmosphere of reality; the business men would apply their intelligence and experience to the solution of the problems involved, and the results of their studies, when made public, would be a textbook of proper procedure, from which no government could depart without putting itself morally on the defensive. How seriously this proposal is taken is shown by the strong protest made by the French when it was supposed that the conference might desire to take an immediate hand in Franco-German relations. M. Poincaré is well aware that much of his present policy will not stand the test of examination in the light of a common sense desire to see normal economic intercourse restored as completely and as immediately as possible. Such an important survey of the facts as would be produced by the business men would reveal in a pitiless light the unreality of the politicians' impossible demands. The friends of peace and good will should on this account and every other applaud the proposal of the International Chamber of Commerce and should unite in bringing to bear on their governments the pressure which will make the conference possible.

PASSIVE resistance is standing remarkably well the test to which it is being put in the Ruhr. Week by week the foundations of French aggression are crumbling away. The notion that Germany could promptly be brought to her knees, which was worked so assiduously by the French government in conciliating public opinion at home and abroad, is now exploded. So also is the notion that notable sums could be extracted from the Ruhr by the occupation. Those Frenchmen who saw in the invasion a chance for renewing the war and extorting a new settlement must be going through a stage of severe disillusionment. It grows harder and harder to cook up a suitable pretext for a declaration of war. The French are in a position to remain indefinitely, but the longer they remain, the fewer friends France will have abroad. If the Germans hold firm and refrain resolutely from active resistance they may yet compel the French to accept a compromise which, while saving the French face, will leave Germany in a much sounder position than she was in when the French troops first entered the Ruhr.

AT present the most serious menace to Germany in her struggle for independence is not French policy, which has played all its trumps, but German political unrest. Unfortunately, the war failed to extirpate the Ludendorffs and Von Hitlers, the men of blood and iron who would be content to see half Germany under the invader's heel if they could have the other half in which to engage in

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military manoeuvres. They would not keep this half long, but military fanatics cannot be depended on to hold back from even an utterly desperate chance. There must be tens of thousands of them mad enough to deserve quarters in the asylums. The recent precautions taken by the German government against a Putsch show that it is alive to the danger. If it continues to exhibit strength in this direction it can afford to lose a few tricks to the French. But if it lets the militarists and monarchists get out of hand, Germany will lose everything.

AFTER the election last November which whittled down the Republican majority in the Senate from 22 to 10, it was pointed out that in the next session the progressive wing of the party would have the balance of power. This will be even more emphatically true as a result of the death of Senator Samuel D. Nicholson of Colorado. It is taken for granted that Governor Sweet, a radical Democrat, will appoint a member of his own party, which cuts the Republican margin to only eight. The La Follette-Borah-Brookhart group can unite with the opposition at any time and prevent the passage of an obnoxious administration measure; they may even be able to give the chairmanship of the Finance Committee to Senator La Follette over the head of Senator Smoot, who is heir presumptive under the seniority rule. The progressives' power will be essentially that of negation; they will be able to hold up bad bills, but not to pass good ones, except as a result of bargaining with the right wing group. They are also giving the latter an alibi for use in the 1924 campaign. Whether a balance of forces, with the liberals to cast the deciding ballot, is better than allowing conservatism plenty of rope to hang itself, is a debatable question on which much light should be shed between next December and the election in the following year; the essential fact is that once more we are in for a period of government by deadlock with all the waste and weakness such a situation implies.

THERE is no activity of the government that has been more heartily cursed than the Veterans' Bureau. Its management, and the treatment of disabled soldiers by the government generally, have aroused resentment enough to start a new war. Pretty nearly everybody agrees about the shortcomings of the Bureau. Five directors have come and gone away from it, beaten and disgusted, in as many years. A fatality of failure haunts the Bureau as a ghost does a deserted house, and whenever a new director takes up his post in it, he is the target not of congratulations but of condolences. Brigadier General Frank Thomas Hines is the latest director. He realizes—the universal sigh of compassion helps him to realize—that the Veterans' Bureau is a mess, a failure. He is, from all accounts, an energetic man quite able to bring order out of administrative chaos. But the job is not only an executive one: politics is inextricably involved. There is probably no other job in Washington which requires a greater combination of executive ability and the political sixth sense. General Hines has tackled an ungrateful and hideously difficult job, and all who care to see our sad treatment of the veterans mended will wish him well.

THE surprisingly large number of persons who believe that the courts exist chiefly to hamper the normal and proper activities of mankind and to reduce as much as possible the amount of human happiness in the world will doubtless feel themselves supported by the recent New York decision invalidating tax exemption on new houses. New York City, in common with most of the rest of the world, has been suffering from an appalling shortage of houses. To meet this condition a state law was passed permitting any municipality to exempt from taxation for ten years new residential construction undertaken during a limited period of time, the exemption not to exceed $5,000 for any one house or apartment. Under this stimulus the city has enjoyed the greatest building boom in its history, 43,000 buildings having been constructed, valued at nearly $400,000,000. After a delay of two years, the law has now been declared unconstitutional by Supreme Court Justice John M. Tierney. If his decision is sustained, many thousands of home builders must bear a heavy unexpected burden and some may lose their property. Justice Tierney of course interprets the measure in the light of existing law; he may not concern himself with the fact that it was passed at a time of grave emergency, that it has relieved that emergency, and that his decision may bring unemployment and distress to thousands of working men as well as financial chaos to hundreds of lending institutions and thousands of borrowers. The city and state authorities must accept responsibility, however, for the fact that this court decision, which might have been secured within a few months of the passage of the law was delayed two years until the amount of possible damage was at a maximum.

IT is a dull day when Henry Ford does not announce a new industrial plan, startling in character, comprehensive in scope and usually sound in its underlying assumptions. In this week's grist is the news that he has bought 120,000 acres of coal land, bringing his total up to 165,000 acres, estimated to contain half a billion tons of coal. Not only will he mine all the coal for his own factories

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and those of all manufacturers of parts for his cars and tractors, but he modestly plans to solve the country's coal problem by installing furnaces which will remove only "the gases and similar substances." This leaves the coal intact, says Mr. Ford, for household heating purposes and it will be distributed to the homes of working men in the vicinity of each plant for that purpose. This plan may not be so efficient in the long run as turning coal into electric power at the mouth of the mine; but if it will work half so well as Mr. Ford promises, it will certainly be far more economical than present methods. It is impossible not to be interested in a man who works out a new theory and then backs it up by purchasing 165,000 acres of land with which to put it into operation.

MR. SNOWDEN'S direct challenge to capitalism in the form of a resolution favoring socialism in the House of Commons is interesting because it marks the first time that a political opposition—for Mr. Snowden is speaking for a large portion of the parliamentary labor party—has so gone on record. The resolution, which will be furiously debated some time after Easter, concentrates at one point opposing forces which had been strung out along a wide front. In the government ranks are to be found many members who hold varying views on this or that feature of government control. They may differ as to things, but they will all rally to oppose a word—"socialism." On the labor side are to be found believers in many kinds of socialism, who are now asked to put interest in a particular method or variety of it below loyalty to something both more narrow and more general of which the word "socialism" is a symbol. The effect will be to force into or out of the ranks of socialism some labor members who had not considered whether or not they were socialists, and to force under the banner of "capitalism" some members of the opposition who had by no means refrained from criticizing that institution. The battle, as fought on this narrower front, will be more violent, stupider and more exciting, not unlike the debates for or against "capitalism" held in halls on the East Side. Way off in the distance an auxiliary force is preparing to discard its antique armor and lumber up in defence of conservatism: some of the Lords are eager to restrict their membership, drop the "backwoodsmen" who never attend, and take their due place as the second chamber.

A GROUP of Californians, including such distinguished citizens as Bishop Parsons, Warren Olney, Mrs. Dane Coolidge, Chester Rowell, Franklin A. Griffin, David Starr Jordan, Jessica Peixotto and William Kent, have formed a committee to work for the repeal of the notorious criminal syndicalism law. Under that law thirty men are serving long terms in prison, eighteen more nav convicted and many more are now held fo. In no case has any charge been brought c commission of acts of violence, or of inciteme violence. The guilt of these defendants con exclusively in the fact of membership in I. W. W. and the testimony of two former m bers of the I. W. W. that they had themselv members of the I. W. W. committed acts of lence. It is incredible that any state in Am should retain on its statute books a law u which men can be deprived of their liberty on absurd grounds. In palliation of Californ offence against human freedom it is fair to s the law was passed when a lot of other s sides California were scared out of thei the Bolshevik bugaboo. California simply farther beyond the confines of sanity than rest. That is all the more reason why she sl return with all haste.

MR. BRUCE BLIVEN has joined the edit board of the New Republic.

The Progressives and 19

THE Republican presidential candidat 1924 has been chosen. When it is annc by a member of the Cabinet that President ing will run again, the matter may be regare settled. The only doubt was as to his own willi ness; and this has evidently now been cleared a To ask another man to run on his record woul course be out of the question, and to seek to r diate that record would mean an abject confes of failure by an administration which has been trolled to an unusual degree by the party bc Mr. Harding has not proved either efficie popular, but this is quite as much his misfo as his fault. The times are out of joint cursed spite, that ever he was chosen in a bed of the Blackstone Hotel, at three o'clock on midsummer morning, to take the blame for fa to put them right.

If the election were held tomorrow, it is erally conceded that the Democrats would wi overwhelming victory; not such a victory as Landslide of the Seven Million in 1920, for country has not had time to grow as tired of Harding as it was of his predecessor, but presidency certainly, and a safe control of b branches of Congress. Unfortunately for the sent party of the Outs, the election is not ton row, but eighteen months away. In the inte two of the deepest grievances of the cor against the present administration are likely substantially abated. The hard times of 192 are being wiped out in a rising tide of prosp which daily shows more signs of turning in pronounced inflationist movement. If it does

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obably end in a crash and a repetition of ent miseries; but this may not happen until the election, and in the meantime the farmers have been rescued at least momentarily from slough of despond. The other chief cause of atisfaction, the administration's apparent lack foreign policy, and its failure to fulfill pre- ion pledges to create something like, and bet- han, the League of Nations, seems likely to issipated to some extent by the President's ad- cy of American participation in the Inter- onal Court.

While prophecy is therefore dangerous, there e conditions which are now well within the fact. It is clear that of the Democratic ties William G. McAdoo is the strongest. ving to California he has blocked the charge eing "too close to Wall Street," and at the time got rid of the hostile Tammany machine. Democratic bosses of such states as New , New Jersey and Indiana do not want doo. He is a more genuine liberal and less able as to the party patronage system than of the outstanding leaders of his party. The cians would prefer some one like Ralston of a whom they think they could control as Republican confrères control Harding. Un- ly for them, there is not only McAdoo to 'er, but Ford.

East makes a grave mistake in under- ating the importance of Henry Ford as a po- al figure. There are thousands of square miles rritory in which he is better liked and more ected than any other man in public life. De- the jokes, owners of his automobiles like him he belief that he produces the best motor car e w rld at its price. Laboring men like him his $5-a-day policy, and the fact that he is nion does not alter this feeling. Railroad ike the wages he pays them, and shippers like ort to reduce rates, which was balked by the tate Commerce Commission. Farmers like for his tractors and for his promise to pro- them with cheap fertilizer if the government him have Muscle Shoals. "Soft money" ad- tes, of whom there are many in the Middle st at present, like his heterodox monetary views. ple of all classes like him because he is success- and does not belong to the despised breed of ticians.

seems probable that Ford will seek the Demo- ic nomination. He won't get it; for the bosses control the convention had rather lose with eone else than win with a man they can't con-

It is not improbable that he will then start rd party of his own, perhaps amalgamate with st, or join the third party movement which orted Christensen in 1920. No such party win an election in 1924; but it would prob- secure such strength as it had at the expense he Northern Democrats rather than the Re- publicans, and it might thereby reelect Harding.

The progressive Republicans, men like Borah, Johnson and La Follette are the ones confronted by a genuine moral problem. Harding's first administration has proved itself an almost complete violation of the principles these men say they hold dear. The party is now definitely committed to a continuation of reactionary domestic policies until 1928. If the progressive wing consents to remain under the Harding banner in the next national election, its members will have tacitly confessed that they are more concerned about staying where the power is, than about their principles. Such a decision would seriously weaken the considerable public respect in which the progressives are now held. If the welfare of liberal principles is not to be left to the accident of a possible McAdoo victory in the Democratic convention, or to a man like Ford who, however respectable his business achievements may be, is politically irresponsible, ignorant of history, and unlikely to conduct the affairs of this nation wisely through a period of storm, the progressive group in the Republican party must make up its mind to do something a little more courageous than to gaze in the proper direction while the administration with which it is now affiliated carries them with it toward the opposite pole.

Liberalism and the Censor

WHY is it that liberals are, as a rule, against the censor? Is it because they believe there is no such thing as corruption in art and literature, or that the influence of such corruption is negligible? No; liberals are not persons who were born in blinkers. They know that there are and always have been artists and writers who seek deliberately to trade in perverted tastes and desires. Nor are liberals prone to underestimate the influence of art and literature. They are the first to ascribe an ennobling influence to the good in art; logically they must ascribe a degrading influence to the bad. Nor is there anything in liberalism that is repugnant to positive action for the curbing of degrading influences. When Léon Daudet, leader of the French Royalists, published a book compounded of piety and pornography it was the French liberals who led the attack and forced him to withdraw it from publication. It is safe to assume that a liberal state would maintain a censorship, and very likely a more drastic one than conservative states maintain.

The liberal is not opposed on principle to censorship. He is opposed to the stupidities of its practice. But when we say "stupidities," are we not begging a good many questions? It is stupid to do something that defeats your own end. Is it fair to characterize as stupid a tory action that defeats a liberal end? Censorship as we know it

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is usually in the hands of the tories. Before we call it stupid we should consider seriously whether it does not after all work in pretty harmoniously with the tory scheme of life.

The censor is now engaged in an attempt to put off the stage Sholom Asch's God of Vengeance. There are unsavory characters in the play—a brothel keeper, a pimp, a number of prostitutes. A large part of the action takes place in a brothel. A very disgusting brew could have been concocted from such ingredients, if the characters had been presented as mere embodiments of their vices. But they are not. They are presented as human beings, animated by purposes that are only variants of ordinary human purposes. Whatever seductions they are supposed to practise in their profession, they practise none whatever on the audience. Any one who is induced to buy a seat for the God of Vengeance with the expectation that he will have his senses stirred will find himself shamefully cheated. The place for him is Broadway, where his requirements will be met by a number of shows on which the censor turns a friendly eye.

But does not that one fact prove the stupidity of the censor? Not at all. The tory world which the censor wishes to conserve is not a world without base passions and vice. In that world there is a place for the brothel keeper, the pimp, the prostitute. There is a place for indecent exposure, for the risqué story, the broad innuendo. That respectable old drama, The School for Scandal, recently put on the stage before audiences composed largely of little maids from school, had its place for the "little milliner," behind the screen in the apartment of a bachelor who admitted, not too shamefacedly, that "Joseph was not all Joseph." Joseph was lying; the "little milliner" was a respectable wife—a vastly different matter, as all the pre-debutantes in the audience were supposed to know. The tory world is not abolitionist in matters of vice. Its motto is simply, "Everything in its place."

In Sholom Asch's drama the brothel keeper and the prostitutes are not in their place. They are not practising prostitution. They are exhibiting that major part of themselves which is our common humanity. And that is what drives the censor to blind rage. As a tory he acts on an instinct, without knowing the reason why. But it is an instinct that comports with his whole system.

What is it that makes it possible to keep everything in its place, vice as well as virtue? It is precisely the carefully cultivated habit that makes us feel: "fallen woman—enough said." If we allowed ourselves to think of her in terms of her memories, her aspirations, her superstitions, her religious feelings, or even in terms of her small gluttonies and asceticisms, her petty selfishness and her naïve generosity—still more if we allowed her to think of herself in such terms—there is a danger that she would quit the life of shame. And then what would we do with her? She would stand for something entirely without a place in a tory world.

A good tory ought to think of the prostitute only as prostitute, just as in the war a good patrioteer required himself to think of the Germans only as Huns—burning, raping, cutting throats. Would the patrioteers have stood for a dramatic representation of the German soldier as a devoted husband and father, an affectionate son, or even a poor greedy fellow who loved life, shuddered at the thought of wounds and death, but tried to do the job cut out for him by those he was bound to obey? Never. That would have been fraternizing with the enemy. Our tory war world had a comfortable place for the German as Hun, none for the German as man. Our tory peace world has no place for the humanity in Sholom Asch's drama.

It is unjust to malign the censor. He is only a faithful private in the ranks of toryism. As the liberal sees it his work is pure mischief. But let us recognize that the tory theory of keeping the fallen woman as prostitute and the German as Hun is by no means a mere stupidity. The tory strives, consciously or unconsciously, to keep the world just as it is, with all its virtues and vices unimpaired. This is, to the tory, the best of all possible worlds. He accepts vice and war as a part of this excellent world and works unconsciously for maintaining them, along with virtue and peace. The liberal knows that a better world is possible. He knows that vice and war are unnecessary evils. He knows that there is only one road to their elimination, and that is through breaking down the barriers of misunderstanding between man and man. The tory censor exists for the purpose of maintaining these barriers. He must be destroyed. But the way to destroy him is to understand him, and compel him to understand himself.

For a Super University

CECIL RHODES was right in his conception. There is a fundamental unity among the English speaking peoples. It is essentially an intellectual unity, and its preservation and extension are immensely worth fostering. But Cecil Rhodes was first of all an islander, and unconsciously based his plans upon the mother country—colonial relation. He dreamed of Americans, Canadians, Australians, South Africans attending Oxford, giving of the spirit of the newer lands and taking of the established cultural values of the older one. But the taking was expected to be quite out of proportion to the giving. So at any rate it has turned out. Oxford may have adapted itself slightly to the Rhodes scholars, but the Rhodes scholars have been compelled to adapt themselves far more thoroughly to Oxford—too thoroughly, indeed, to re-

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turn to their own homes as the most effective exponents of English speaking unity.

It is easy to see now why the plan failed of complete success. Oxford and Cambridge are, and must remain, primarily embodiments of English culture, English unity. These are old things; the intellectual unity of the English speaking world is a new thing and needs an embodiment appropriate to itself. It needs a university built up on new foundations which may serve as the intellectual crown of the whole English speaking world. There are many good reasons why such a university should be founded in England rather than in America or Canada or Australia. England has a longer cultural history and hence a greater proportion of persons with fully formed cultural and scientific interests. She is the centre and clearing house for the English speaking world; and above all she is planted off the coast of Europe, in close relation with the intellectual movements of the great continental states. England is unquestionably the country in which such an institution could work most effectively, provided that it was new from the ground up.

It would have to be new, and at the same time powerful. It would need to be strong enough to attract to itself the most distinguished scholars not only from all parts of the English speaking world, but from France, Italy, Germany, Russia, as well. It would need laboratories, libraries and other equipment on a scale that would be lavish for even our richest American universities. It would need scholarship funds sufficient to draw the ablest young men from even the remotest corners of the world. Unless it could be, from the outset, unquestionably the greatest university in the world, it would be nothing at all. But if it could be that, its influence on civilization would be incalculable.

What is the use of beguiling ourselves with such a dream institution? It need not be left as a dream. What are the conditions of its fulfillment? Mainly, money. With money enough the buildings would rise as by magic; the corps of distinguished scholars would be drawn together in a few short months and students from all over the world would pack their hopes and ambitions and set out for London.

Money is the one prerequisite, a huge sum of money. Where is it to be had, in a world struggling under a mountain of debt? Why—with credit to Mr. Vanderlip—out of the debt.

England owes America some four billion dollars, under the recent debt agreement. There are tens of thousands of Americans, including many of our richest citizens, who feel that this debt should have been remitted. So far as their means permit, they can as private citizens bring about a revision of the settlement far better than mere remission. They can buy these British bonds from the American treasury and place them in a fund for the endowment of this greatest of universities. Let every American who favored the remission of the debt calculate what addition that would have made to his tax bills for the rest of his life. So much he could easily afford to give in the form of British bonds to the endowment of this university. There would be, at once, an imposing sum, we guess some tens of millions. But very few would limit themselves to such mere conscience money payments.

Consider how freely Americans contribute to the endowment of their Alma Mater, to the commemoration of the work of some great educator or statesman, to the glory of city or state. Suppose that a body of the greatest educators of the English speaking countries were to draft plans for the world's greatest university, to commemorate the common effort in the world war, to testify to the common hope in peace and civilization. And suppose that the very character of the endowment were commemorative of the effort, testimony of the good will and unity of the English speaking nations. It is not conceivable that the project would be allowed to fail for want of funds.

One Reason for Railroad Troubles

RAILWAY interests for the past few years have had one strong argument for everything they wished to do. The railways are underbuilt, underequipped, undermaintained. In order to serve the public they must have more capital. And in order to get more capital they must earn a fair profit to offer to the investor. This reasoning underlay the guarantee and the rate-making sections of the Transportation Act of 1920. It was used to justify "deflation" of labor, with all that policy involved of conflict with the unions and the disastrous shop strike. It will be used again in attempts to get away from "restrictive legislation."

It is true, of course, that many railroads find it difficult to earn a rate of return on their existing capitalization, under their existing managements, sufficient to attract investors in competition with highly profitable industries the prices of whose products are not under government control. Little or no railroad stock has been issued since 1915. Those who remember the financial manipulation of the Erie, the New Haven, and many other roads, however, question whether the real cause is too low earning power or the legacy of stock-jobbing and banker management. But we are told that all such matters are ancient history and must be forgotten; that the watering of values is not the fault of the present owners, and that in order to avoid confiscation and attract new investment we must validate all the bonds and stock now outstanding and pay high rates on them.

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The $200,000,000 suit of the minority stockholders of the Denver and Rio Grande now pending in the New York State Supreme Court furnishes evidence that financial mismanagement is not all ancient history, and that the regulation introduced in the past twenty-five years was not the cause of injured credit, at least in this case, unless it was so by virtue of failure to prevent the operations of the financiers. Not only the stockholders, but also the public and railroad labor have suffered.

Twenty years ago the bonds of the Denver and Rio Grande sold above par, it was paying dividends on $49,775,000 worth of preferred stock, and its common stock had a substantial market value. It gave service and enjoyed a high reputation. Its credit was good both in the financial markets and with the public, and it encountered no difficulty in raising the funds it needed. Today the Denver and Rio Grande is in its second receivership through default on some of its bond issues. Both its preferred and common stock have been cancelled without the payment of a cent to the owners. The tractive power of its locomotives and the capacity of its cars have not increased for years, and the receiver estimates that $25,000,000 will be needed to restore it to good order. In addition, its equipment is in such poor condition that the shippers along its lines cannot get service, on account of the shopmen's strike which the existing management helped to provoke and will not settle.

The cause of this disaster was not "restrictive legislation," but private enterprise as applied by the Gould interests to the road in the past score of years. How they planned a transcontinental system under their control is well known. An essential part of that system was to be a new road from Salt Lake City to San Francisco, connecting the Denver and Rio Grande with the coast. The Goulds acquired a controlling interest in the Denver, and then proceeded to promote the Western Pacific. A large majority of the common stock of the new road was allotted to the Denver. The estimated construction cost of $38,000,000 was financed by a first mortgage bond issue totalling $45,000,000. But the construction cost ran up to about $90,000,000, extravagantly, according to authorities. The Denver and Rio Grande was saddled with this excess, together with the deficits of the first few years of operation, by a second mortgage of $25,000,000, and unsecured notes to the extent of $31,000,000. The new road ran across unproductive territory. It could not bear such a heavy burden of capitalization. Its construction was of little benefit to the Denver, which had been self-sufficient. Yet, under the financial management the Denver had to shoulder the heavy and unwarranted burden.

In 1915 the Western Pacific—under absolute control of the directors of the Denver and Rio Grande—defaulted on the payment of interest to its first mortgage bondholders and was immediately thrown into a receivership, to which it consented without a struggle. This in spite of the fact that it had cash in its treasury, and in spite of the fact that the Denver and Rio Grande had signed a contract to make good on this interest and had the funds with which to do so. The Western Pacific was sold to the first mortgage bondholders at a forced sale for $18,000,000, a procedure which wiped out both the second mortgage bond issue and the notes held by the Denver. The directors of the latter road actually urged this action.

The new owners of the Western Pacific then pressed a suit against the Denver for not living up to its contract to pay the interest on the extinct first mortgage bonds. They secured a judgment against the Denver for $38,000,000, stripped it of all properties they could lay their hands on, and in default of further payment threw the road into a receivership and, after the end of government control in 1920, bought it at a forced sale for $5,000,000, thus wiping out the preferred and common stock issues. Default on two of the bond issues by the reorganized company has thrown it into a second receivership.

The details of these transactions are intricate. The minority stockholders, who lost all, charge that their loss was the result of conspiracy and fraud, and that the whole manipulation was planned by the Gould control, which they say exercised its will by means of interlocking directorates and reaped all the profits from the time of the extravagant construction of the Western Pacific to the latest bankruptcy. But whether there was fraud or not, the loss occurred, and it occurred through the grandiose and obscure schemes of private railroad financiers.

This sort of thing has injured the credit of railroads. It has made investors wary and the public hostile. Who knows where it may occur next? What insurance has the public against it? We are told that confiscation in the public interest is immoral; meanwhile confiscation in private interest seems frequently to crop up. The railroads, to be sure, have to have capital. But how can we keep on giving the railroads more capital and larger profits, unless we have some positive assurance of a different type of management and control?

Back to Inflation?

INDUSTRIAL prosperity in this country is now so widespread that all thoughtful students of affairs look forward with apprehension to the possibility that we are entering upon a period of inflation which will terminate in a crash as painful and disastrous as that of the autumn of 1920. The time is long past when any one was so simple minded as to suppose that good times are desirable on their own account. We have learned by heart-breaking experience that the country moves

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through business cycles, on what Vachel Lindsay doubtless would describe as the "boom—crash—boom—crash—boom" system. Whether this be an inevitable necessity or not, it is the dominant reality in present-day affairs.

That business is on the upgrade again, there is no possible doubt. Wholesale prices, according to the Federal Reserve Board, have advanced 13 percent in a year. Production has increased 40 percent and the output of basic commodities has actually passed the high mark of the great boom of 1919-20. Bank transactions have recovered more than three-quarters of the difference between their lowest and highest levels. Unemployment is generally agreed to be at a minimum. The sales of Chicago mail order houses, always a good index of general conditions, are said to have been 50 percent larger last month than a year ago. Despite the new tariff law, the preliminary estimate of the Department of Commerce states that imports last December (the latest months for which figures are available) had a value greater by $60,000,000 than those during December, 1921. Railroad loadings, in terms of mere tonnage, are at the maximum.

With so many signs indicating the danger that business expansion may get beyond control, it is natural that attention should be fastened upon the Federal Reserve Board, the agency expressly created for use in situations of this sort. The Board has already advanced the rediscount rate for New York and Boston, and presumably will do so again if it deems further action necessary. Unfortunately, our childlike faith in the miraculous power of the Board has been shattered in recent years. We have learned not only that it can cause much suffering when its power is clumsily exerted, as was the case in 1920, but also that it has less real effectiveness in keeping the country's business on an even keel than we had supposed. It can accelerate or retard; it cannot call a halt, much less produce a right-about-face. Most important of all, the System, which can only be of genuine usefulness if it is kept impartial and scientific, has become the football of politics. President Harding has yielded to the pressure of the Middle West and removed from office the former governor of the Board whose policies were thought to have worked a hardship in that region. No other single act of the administration has greater potentialities for harm than this opening to the politicians of a door which should have remained forever shut in their faces.

The theory that present rising prices are to be attributed solely to the expansion of currency and credit is, of course, an over-simplified view. While the tariff has not succeeded in reducing imports it has without doubt been responsible for great price increases. The restrictions on immigration have also produced a shortage of unskilled labor in some parts of the country, and though the size and seriousness of this shortage are exaggerated by employers' organizations for political purposes, it has certainly had the result of raising wages, thereby aiding the upward movement of both wages and prices, already under way.

On the side of those who refuse to see dangerous expansion as a probability of the near future must be noted several important items. The boom of 1919-20 was accompanied by unexampled prosperity among the farmers, which does not exist today. While their situation is in general somewhat better than in 1921, their purchasing power is still limited. The expansion four years ago was also aided by large exports to Europe to fill the deficiencies in "peace goods" which could not be produced during the war. This demand is again reviving somewhat after having been greatly reduced; but the present expansion is nothing like the former one, and could hardly be financed if it were, in view of the billions of dollars' worth of commercial loans which have already been made abroad. A third factor useful in preventing a "runaway" demand for labor and materials is the government policy of curtailment in its non-essential activities, such as building, during such a period as the present. This policy was the one notable achievement of the Hoover unemployment conference, and within the past few days evidence has been furnished that it is to be applied. It is, of course, no more than an influence for mild retardation; but even so, it is better than nothing.

Probably the most hopeful factor in the whole situation is the fact that the latest bad smash-up occurred only a little more than two years ago. The business community has a short memory, but not so short that it has forgotten the sufferings of 1921. If disastrous inflation is averted, the caution of industrialists and bankers, burnt and fearing the fire, rather than the effective operations of any government agency, will be responsible.

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Three Years of the Transportation Act

THERE is one (hardly more) present favorable aspect of our railroad problem: it is not yet involved in partisan politics. President Wilson put it, without specific recommendation, up to a Republican Congress for its solution; Congress evolved the Transportation Act of 1920, and the Democratic President signed it. Present and prospective conditions may, therefore, be freely discussed by those excluded from partisan discussion.

The charge that the Act was "dictated by Wall Street" is not well grounded. Doubtless the Act reflected in the main the desires of the forces that have controlled under it; but it also reflected in substantial measure the independent and conscientious judgment of many members of Congress who desired only the public interest. Probably some Senators and Representatives doubtful of its value thought an experiment along such lines must be tried before the country would be ready to adopt more radical and effective methods of insuring adequate, uninterrupted, and economical railroad transportation service.

A three-year test of the Act is plainly enough to warrant tentative, even if not conclusive, views as to its value. Government control ended with February 1920. For most practical purposes the three calendar years, 1920-22, for which figures approximately correct are now available, may be treated as three years of renewed corporation control; perhaps January and February of 1923 will show slightly better net earnings than the corresponding months of 1920. Let us consider first, though not as most important, the results achieved for the security-holders—the owners of about $10,500,000,000 of bonds, perhaps $4,500,000,000 of dividend-paying stock and about $4,000,000,000 of non-dividend-paying stock—intercorporate holdings make accuracy impossible. The Act, as properly construed and applied by the Commission, contemplated, for two years, net earnings of 6 percent upon the value, tentatively determined at $18,900,000,000, or $1,134,000,000 a year, of which $378,000,000 was for extensions and additions to the property, leaving as annual distributable income $962,000,000. Although the rate-payers are intended to contribute the considerable sum of $378,000,000 a year to increase the railroad properties, there is no provision that such additions shall not be added to the rate base, thus requiring the rate-payer to furnish, pro tanto, both capital and a return thereon. Scant earnings have so far prevented this injustice.

The Commission promptly and wisely granted all the rate increases suggested by the managers, reckoned as adequate to produce the full 6 percent return for two years and 5¾ percent for the third year; so that the companies should have had during the three years just ended an aggregate net income from railroad operation of about $3,380,000,000. If rate-raising had proved to be the equivalent of profit-producing, the amount distributable as dividends, hitherto (eliminating intercompany payments and stock dividends) about $275,000,000 to $300,000,000 a year, would have been nearly doubled. With about $100,000,000 more of non-operating income—if the Act had worked as contemplated—the companies would have been able to distribute to security-holders each year about $1,060,000,000, which would have given their stocks and bonds a market value of probably $20,000,000,000 instead of $12,000,000,000 to $14,000,000,000—which, tested by current sales, has been for some time their approximate market value. An increase of six to eight billions in the market value of railroad securities was an attractive prospect.

Such were the results contemplated for the owners of railroad securities under the new Act and under the rates made by the Interstate Commerce Commission, whose ruling against lower state-made intra-state rates was fully sustained by the Supreme Court in the Wisconsin Rate Case, 257 U. S. 563.

Now, as to the results achieved:

The net earnings *shown* were: for 1920, practically nothing; for 1921, $615,000,000; for 1922, $777,000,000, a total of $1,392,000,000, or, say, $1,440,000,000 if January and February of this year show twice the earnings of January and February 1920. Otherwise stated, the actual earnings were about 43 percent of the contemplated earnings of $3,380,000,000. True, the rate increases, averaging about 35 percent, were not generally operative for four to six months after March 1, 1920; and pending increased revenue from increased rates the government guaranteed for six months the standard return of federal control—the average earnings for the three years ending June 30, 1917—about $930,000,000. This guarantee, or cost-plus contract, for six months will cost the government nearly $600,000,000. During the twenty-six months of federal control, the actual earnings were from $35,000,000 to $45,000,000 a month less than the standard return. During the six months of restored corporation control, the net earnings shown were about $100,000,000 a month less than the standard return. Otherwise stated: during the first six months of restored corporation management, the average monthly deficit chargeable to the taxpayer

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was more than double the deficit so chargeable during the war and down to March 1, 1920.

The most significant result of restored private efficiency was an increase in the operating expenses of over $1,400,000,000: from $4,399,715,535 in 1919 to $5,831,465,116 in 1920. No undue publicity has been given by railroad managers to this achievement. Perhaps one-third to one-half of this increase went to labor. Where the remainder went, protracted study of the returns leaves one in a maze of doubt. The traffic moved was the largest ever known; the results the worst.

The net earnings from railway operation for the three years were about $100,000,000 less than the interest payments. They are proportionally the smallest for any like period since railroad statistics were kept. With the government six-months' guarantee, plus non-operating income of about $100,000,000 a year, the companies have shown aggregate distributable income of about $2,300,000,000 for the three years. Under the federal control contracts they would have had a guaranteed income of about $2,800,000,000 plus non-operating income of about $300,000,000 more —an aggregate of $3,100,000,000 or about $800,000,000 more than the actual income, which as already noted, includes about $600,000,000 from the government.

From the standpoint of the security holder, the outstanding and alarming fact is that for three years, with rates admittedly at least as high as the traffic will bear, the roads as an aggregate have earned but about one third of the moderate dividends distributed—earnings plainly inadequate to put railroad stocks in good credit, as they must be if former sources for capital are to be relied upon.

It is true that in the year just ended a considerable number of roads *show* dividends fully earned. But as the railroads have never adopted modern business practices to the extent of having a cost-accounting system, net earnings *shown* may, and under present conditions probably are, more than net earnings actually made. The weight of informed opinion is that the roads as an aggregate have not maintained their properties, particularly their equipment. Leading railroad men have publicly admitted it. The shopmen's strike alone would ground that inference. It is almost certain that the *real* net earnings of the roads during the three years just ended are less than their interest disbursements.

Besides, the new provisions as to rate divisions and for the recapture of excess earnings tend to make *aggregate* earnings of all, and not individual earnings of a few, the real test. The ruling in the New England Rate Division Case, 66 I. C. C. 196, unanimously sustained by the Supreme Court on February 19, 1923, is that the roads are mutually dependent parts of the transportation system that must in the public interest be maintained in all its essential parts.

This three-year showing plainly indicates that a large part of our railroad stocks and some of our bonds are in danger of becoming permanently non-income producing. Banks, insurance companies, trust companies and other handlers of other people's money should give early and critical attention to the organization and management of these properties, belonging beneficially to millions of scattered bond-holders and stockholders. On this showing railroads investments are in large part not safe.

Our railroad owners are unhappy and with just cause.

This bad financial showing is important, not only as related to the rights of the present security-holders, but as related to the far more important question of transportation service. Poor earners are poor service producers. "Financing" is nothing but doctoring for disease that would not exist if the roads were making and properly applying adequate net earnings. If our railroad companies had been properly organized and administered, they would no more need financing or banking support than the Ford Company. Chronic and artificial invalidism is the reliance of many doctors, medical and financial—an undesirable lot of parasites.

But no amount of money, either from earnings or financing, will meet the vitally important need of adequate and uninterrupted service. In that field the controlling factor is human. Management and operating staff must loyally and *continously* cooperate; otherwise bad service, strikes. Just here restored corporate management has scored its largest failure. By the Transportation Act, Congress did not undertake to make strikes illegal. It adopted the plan, urged by many railroad managers, of a Labor Board and other arbitration and conciliation machinery. Many sound-thinking men believed the plan would work. The writer did not. But it was an experiment entitled to a good faith trial. How it would have worked if it had been accepted in good faith by substantially all the railroad companies no one can know. It was not so accepted.

The farming-out of repair work by the Erie, Pennsylvania, New York Central, and some other large companies, was an arrogant flouting of the Act and of the Labor Board, calculated, and apparently intended, to irritate the operating staff and to show contempt for the Labor Board. Incidentally, investigation by the Interstate Commerce Commission showed that the companies spent on this outside repair work millions in excess of what it would have cost in their own shops. The managers were thus wasting their stockholders' money in an attempt to destroy the labor provisions of the Transportation Act and to provoke their employees into action which could be used as a basis of creating public sentiment against them. It was most unfortunate that the Labor Board's

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condemnation of this farming-out was so long delayed as to impair the confidence of the operating forces in the courage and fair dealing of that tribunal. Perhaps the men constituting the Labor Board did as well as any other set of men would have done, with such an organization, created to deal with an intrinsically difficult problem, made more difficult through the obstructive tactics adopted by railroad managers who should have given the Board loyal support. It is not generally recognized that until the shopmen's strike of last July all the labor organizations had obeyed the rulings of the Board, while from fifty to one hundred railroad companies had disregarded them.

The general result is that confidence in the labor provisions of the Act and in the Board, taken together, has been undermined; the President of the United States has suggested that the Board be abolished. The experiment is a failure. It is plain enough that we shall not have uninterrupted service until railroad strikes are made illegal—and, as matter of practical politics, they cannot be made illegal until there is a radical change in railroad organization and management. No Congress will or ought to take away the strike weapon and leave railroad labor to the exploitation of the forces now controlling our railroads. Relations between labor and management were never so bad; there is a chronic condition of hatred and distrust.

The shopmen's strike of last July was the natural and inevitable result of the tactics pursued by a substantial part of the railroad management. It was a provoked and promoted strike. It is a pity that the labor leaders allowed themselves to be trapped into it. Their tactics were bad, possibly their ethics were bad. But charging everything that may fairly be charged against the labor leaders, the main, moral, financial and social responsibility for that foolish, destructive strike rests upon railroad management. Its cost to the country, to the railroads and to employees cannot be measured. If a small fraction of the losses currently reported, particularly to fruit, truck and grain raisers, be correct, the cost must have been hundreds, even thousands, of millions of dollars. Present deplorable transportation conditions are in substantial part due to that strike. Thousands of the old employees are still out, some of them living miserably in tents. The shop forces of the companies that have not settled are, on the weight of the evidence, far less efficient than the former forces. The coal scarcity, particularly in New England, is mainly due to the arrogant and unwarranted refusal of New England railroad companies to settle that strike. If the thousand revolvers added to the shop equipment of the Boston and Maine Railroad last summer, at a cost of about $20,000, could be swapped for copies of Henry Ford's Life and Work, and the book studied by the managers, conceivably coal might be furnished our shivering population and, incidentally, something be earned for our impoverished stockholders. Gunmen and strike breakers are poor stuff to run railroads with.

How far our general and persistent coal problem is also a railroad problem we should know better after we get the report of the Coal Commission, provided of course, that Commission gets and reports the facts. Plainly, transportation is at all times a large factor in our fuel problem. The coal problem cannot be solved until railroad service is better, cheaper, and uninterrupted by strikes.

The current impression that wages are an increasing part of the general railroad expenses is the reverse of the truth, as shown by the following table:

COMPENSATION TO EMPLOYEES

Class I Roads

Calendar year.	Amount (in millions of dollars).	Ratio to revenues.	Ratio to expenses.
1916	1,508	41.60	63.47
1917	1,739	43.33	61.48
1918	2,606	53.40	65.62
1919	2,828	54.97	64.59
1920	3,682	59.59	62.15
1921	2,765	50.13	60.61
1922	2,669	47.52	59.91

This table demonstrates the surprising facts that wages are a smaller proportion of gross railroad expenses in 1921 and 1922 than in 1916 and 1917, and that the increase in wages has been less than the increase in other items of expense. A part of the decrease shown in 1921 and 1922 is probably due to contracting out repair work, thus lessening the number of employees.

Bad earnings, bad service and increasingly bad relations with labor, are the outstanding features of the three years' experience of restored corporation management under the Act which present managerial forces still say is the best they can devise. But there is some foundation for the claim that the situation has recently improved. We are told to ignore 1920 and 1921; to regard 1922 as the real test of the Act. But why disregard facts? Nineteen hundred and twenty was the year of the largest traffic ever known, and rates averaged nearly 50 percent higher than during federal control. Nineteen hundred and twenty-one was no worse than many years past and prospective.

We might phrase the most arguably tenable optimistic theory as follows: *if* the $777,000,000 *reported* as earned in 1922 were real and not in fact artificial (deferred maintenance and disregarded depreciation); *if* general business continues good, so that traffic in large volume is offered for transportation; *if*, in spite of high rates and of motor and water competition, particularly through the Panama Canal, the railroads hold as large a share of such heavy volume of traffic as during

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recent months; *if* the Interstate Commerce Commission resists the already tremendous and steadily increasing public pressure for lower rates; *if* the companies and the Labor Board succeed in preventing increased wages to meet mounting living costs, without provoking further expensive strikes,—then 1923 may show reasonable earnings made and tolerable service rendered by the American railroads. But substantial failure in any of these particulars means recurrence to the earning conditions of 1920 and 1921, threatening ultimate destruction of a large share of our railroad stocks, a considerable share of our railroad bonds, and an abandonment of substantial existing mileage. No reasonable and experienced person dares prophesy such completely favorable railroad-earning conditions. Facing and not blinking the facts, it is clear that only radical change in organization, policies, administration, and managerial personnel, will enable American railroads to render the essential services needed, on reasonable rates, and with reasonable return to their owners.

Our railroad problem is not solved. It is more acute and pressing than ever before. Before the next Congress meets, it should be fully and dispassionately discussed, in the hope that public opinion may crystallize on some real remedy.

GEORGE W. ANDERSON.

Belgium: Reluctant Ally

NINE weeks after the French and the Belgian troops marched into the Ruhr, the premiers of France and Belgium met at Brussels to discuss matters pertaining to the situation. Events of momentous importance transpired behind the closed door of that conference. M. Poincaré left the meeting "pale, nervous and irritable," while M. Theunis, ordinarily placid and composed, was "red and excited." Following the meeting came the joint French and Belgian declaration that the Ruhr would be evacuated as soon as Germany commenced to pay reparations, and it is no longer a secret that that declaration was forced upon the reluctant French premier by Belgium. The reasons for all this are, as the French might say, fatally lucid.

When the French forces advanced into the Ruhr, the Belgian troops advanced with them. Without the active support of Belgium and the passive approval of Italy it is most doubtful whether M. Poincaré could have enforced his policy of "sanctions." At the same time it is interesting to recall that whereas Italy, at the January Conference of Premiers in Paris, actually presented a plan for the handling of the reparations problem—which with the British and the French plans was formally read to the assembled delegates and left without further discussion—Belgium, apparently, made no definite statement of her views and had no plan to present. Today Belgium's voice is beginning to be heard, and each successive utterance from that quarter brings Belgium forward more and more as a forgotten but increasingly important factor in the Ruhr situation

With the possible exception of Poland, there is no small "neutral" country in Europe whose position is more delicate than that of Belgium, nor who is more gravely threatened by her various neighbors for both strategic and economic reasons.

In the ports of Antwerp and Zeebrugge, Belgium possesses two of the finest water outlets in Europe. In the Bocage district of the province of Hainault she has coal. In the province of Liège she has the Cockerill steel works and others. In Flanders and Brabant she has manufacturing centres and dairy farms. And in the province of Luxemburg she has timber and pasture land. Nor is that all. She has an exceedingly well-educated, docile and hardworking population, and a coast line far superior to that of Holland in that it presents none of the topographical difficulties necessitating the upkeep of an extensive dyke and canal system.

Because of the strategic and tactical value of its geographical position, as a threat both to Central Europe and to Great Britain, and because of its material riches, Belgium has been known for generations as "the Cockpit of Europe." Spain, Austria, France and Holland have held it successively, and time and again Great Britain has intervened and fought her bloodiest battles to prevent the consolidation of their conquest by these various powers threatening to establish a Continental Empire. The treaty by which England, among other powers, solemnly guaranteed the neutrality of Belgium, was a very serious matter for Great Britain, and when the latter power stated in 1914 that she was prepared to fight for the preservation of Belgian neutrality, she meant it literally, not as an act of sentimental friendship, but as a life or death matter for herself.

As regards Belgium, the final revolt against Dutch rule which wrung her independence from Holland in 1875, is still sufficiently fresh in the minds of the people to make the sovereignty of their land a very precious thing to them. Belgium realizes perfectly that her sovereignty depends upon the neutrality which England alone can be trusted to guard consistently, because Belgium's integrity is more vital to England than to any other power. Economically and strategically, the possession of Belgium by France, Germany or

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even little Holland, would menace Great Britain. During the late war the submarine and air base of Zeebrugge, the aerodromes of Ghent, Vilvorde, etc., formed a very serious point of attack against Great Britain, and in the case of a war with France, for instance, with Belgium under French control, and French staff officers and engineers as familiar with the use of Belgian railways and other facilities as the German staff personnel was with those of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg during the late war, the situation would be even more serious for Great Britain than it was in 1914-18.

Hence British protection of Belgian neutrality forms consideration number one, which prompted M. Theunis, the Belgian premier, to announce to M. Poincaré: "We do not feel able to offend too deeply our Anglo-Saxon friends," and causes M. H. Carton de Wiart, the Belgian Minister of State, to say even more plainly, in an article in the Revue Générale (Brussels, February 15th): "We cannot safely offend England . . . for our neutrality depends upon the surrounding countries."

On the other hand, it may safely be deduced that Belgian cooperation with the French in the Ruhr advance is strongly influenced by the same motive, for Belgium's economic welfare is also dependent upon the good will of France and Germany, and more especially upon free access to the Rhineland and Lorraine. A Rhineland and a Lorraine, however, permanently occupied by the French forces animated by a policy of economic imperialism are by no means conducive to Belgian welfare or peace of mind. Whereas formerly the Belgian frontier to the northeast was occupied by neutral Holland, to the east by Germany and to the southwest by France, with the North Sea washing the fourth boundary, Belgium now finds herself bounded on two sides by France, cut off from access to Central Europe and the overland route to Russia, with France able at any moment, to close in with a movement of incredible swiftness and overwhelm her. Belgium has no particular reason to trust France, which took from her a Flanders irridenta containing Lille and Roubaix, any more than she trusts Germany, which snatched Aix-la-Chapelle and the Malmédy region and secured the "independence" of the richer half of the province of Luxemburg, or Holland, which holds part of Limbourg and the mouth of the Scheldt river on which Antwerp is situated. Antwerp's prosperity depends upon the Rhineland, and French control of the latter would mean, ipso facto, virtual if not nominal control of Antwerp. This is consideration number two which caused Premier Theunis, while consenting to military unity of command, to demand at Brussels separate zones of economic and civil control in the Ruhr and the Rhineland generally.

The Ruhr adventure, after all, is not wholly after the heart of the Belgians. M. Carton de Wiart, again, in the article quoted above, refers to it in the following terms: "We thought that the era of hesitation and evasion was closed by the London Conference of May, 1921, which brought to us all relief and hope. But now the problem is reopened in its entirety. The advance into the Ruhr is a new phase. But no Belgian, not even the most optimistic, doubts that, whatever the result of the Ruhr advance, our rights and our indemnities must suffer a severe cut."

Judging by this and other utterances of the Belgian press, it cannot be doubted that Belgium does not expect any very great results from the occupation of the Ruhr. She has not the same motive for such expectation as France might have. In the case of France, if reparations are not forthcoming, she might at least gain control of the industries of the Ruhr, which means control of the major part of the industries of Central Europe. But in the case of Belgium, if reparations are not forthcoming and the industrial life of the Ruhr is controlled by France, what is there left for her, who has been trying for months, and unsuccessfully, to obtain even an amelioration of the French protective tariffs and port duties that have a seriously affected Belgian trade? Practically speaking such an outcome would mean no reparations, no trade and an increasingly expensive occupation under French direction. While France must have made promises of some kind to Belgium, the latter country seems inclined to remember, with some uneasiness, the traditional fate of catspaws. Hence consideration number three, which caused M. Theunis to force from M. Poincaré, at Brussels, the formal declaration that as soon as Germany begins paying reparations (not as soon as Germany completes the payment of reparations) the French and Belgian occupation will be withdrawn.

This declaration leaves the French government in an interesting position. It lifts the Ruhr advance from the realm of uncertainty into a sphere of very definite limitations. A way is definitely opened for a new discussion of the reparations question, if Germany really feels her case to be strong enough. At the same time it stiffens the passive resistance of the Ruhr population, who are enabled to feel that in the event of France's displaying an utterly unreasonable obstinacy towards Germany, she will become isolated by Belgium's withdrawal.

That Belgian assistance is necessary to France would seem to be proven by the fact that M. Theunis could force such a declaration from M. Poincaré. It seems to be quite obvious that Italy, even were she actively friendly, which she is not, could do little to assist France in this venture, both for geographical and economic reasons. A neutral Britain occupying the Cologne area has already caused tremendous difficulties to France in the matter of railways, and also of German morale. A neutral Belgium would not only make

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transportation a matter of unparalleled obstacles, but would leave the French, from a military point of view, in a salient presenting many dangers and would also give to the population of the Ruhr and the Rhineland numerous opportunities for smuggling and trade. It would, in fact, become exceedingly difficult to deal with Great Britain and Belgium both presenting protests on behalf of the traders of their respective nations who find their business interfered with the French. And a great deal of Belgian business is suffering from the present dual occupation.

With the Brussels Conference the Ruhr situation has definitely entered upon a new stage. Belgium has emerged as a factor that may prove vitally important in determining the future course of events. Whatever plans M. Poincaré may have formulated on the assumption of Belgium's acquiescence now need serious reconsideration in the light of that country's new and rapidly crystallizing attitude.

LUCIA PYM.

John Dewey: Naturalist

A REPORT OF THE CARUS LECTURES FOR 1922

JOHN DEWEY is a peculiar and composite personality. Many thousands of readers know him as a writer on topics of public interest, upon the various phases and problems of democracy and particularly upon education. Many more thousands of teachers and school executives know him as an experimenter and theorist in pedagogy. But really he is a professor of philosophy. This reminder seems paradoxical enough when one remembers the ardent and respectfully impatient article of Randolph Bourne's which appeared in the columns of the New Republic in the spring of its first year. How sequestered a philosopher John Dewey seemed to that violent young radical, and how violent was his true disciple's savage indignation that this intellectual giant was not "out in the arena of the concrete, himself battling with current problems!"

Since 1915 Dewey has been out in the arena; but he has never ceased to be a philosopher. Several volumes attest the steadfastness of his devotion to his main business straight through these busiest later years. And if further proof were necessary it has been given by his colleagues. When Mrs. Paul Carus expressed her intention of endowing a lectureship in philosophy in memory of her husband, the professors who were her advisers agreed that it was most fitting that the first lectures should be given by the foremost American philosopher, Professor John Dewey. And the lectures were accordingly given on December 27th, 28th and 29th of last year, before nearly the entire membership of the American Philosophical Association.

These lectures not only bear witness to the truly philosophical character of Dewey's thought; they do more. They make it clear again that if the wisdom of this philosopher has percolated through academic walls to the teachers of public schools and the readers of liberal weeklies, that is because his is a peculiarly natural philosophy. Dewey is a naturalist, and like all naturalists he thinks the thoughts of mankind generally, only at a higher intellectual level.

Dewey is a naturalist in two senses: his is a philosophy of nature and not of psychical or mathematical abstractions; his is also a most natural way of regarding the world and human existence. This does not mean that it is easy. Naturalness is always difficult to attain. One has to practise assiduously before one can field hot grounders or execute double trills upon the piano easily and naturally, allowing each finger to move freely and simply through its appointed task with no wild gestures and no awkward stiffness. A natural philosophy is not the product of easy and unconscious growth; it comes of thinking through the stiff gestures of metaphysics to a simpler view of things.

Dewey's view is that of a carefully cherished naïveté. He sometimes calls it naïve realism. And he means by this that the naïve view of the world and of human life is the only one which affords any clue to reality. The world is what it is, and we know only what we know. When we ask whether it really is what it seems to be, and attempt to raise ourselves out of the precarious uncertainty of our human knowledge by erecting elaborate intellectual structures, we sometimes forget that those structures are built of the materials of ordinary every-day knowledge and that the world they attempt to explain is the casual and conglomerate world we live in when we are not thinking about reality but are attending to our immediate personal concerns. The stuff of which existence is composed is precisely those immediate and personal concerns, and not any obscure intellectual abstraction of them. That has been the burden of Dewey's philosophy all along.

The particular concern of the Carus Lectures was the relation of the elaborate and artificial structures of science and metaphysics to the raw material of existence. By and large, neither science nor metaphysics has given, or has wished to give, an account of existence as it is most certainly known to us. On the contrary, the whole point and purpose of such elaborate exercises of the intellect has been to escape from existence as it is most immediately known. Metaphysics has escaped by standing upon the shoulders of art, by trying first to beautify existence and then to insist that only the beautifications are real. Science has escaped by creating the means of the improvement

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of life and then by taking the means for the thing. Only literature describes existence as it finds it and plays it up for what it is.

In literature, as in life, one of the chief characteristics of existence is its contingency. Things do not always happen as they should. Luck and happiness are incalculably important in every phase of life. To be sure, there is a certain regularity in the universe. Many things turn out as they are expected to. The guilty are often punished and the innocent relieved from blame. But it does not always happen so. Accident and mischance and unpredictable miscarriage are part of the very stuff of existence as it is inescapably borne in upon us, and as it is reflected in literature and art.

None the less literature and art are an attempt at an escape to a higher plane of existence—a plane ruled by the forms of art, the canons of what is fitting and beautiful and appropriate. So is magic and superstition, and so also philosophy. The motive behind each is the deep anxiety all men feel to escape the utter contingency, the sheer, uncontrolled unpredictability of life, to a plane where, either by the perfect nemesis of art or by supernatural command, whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap. "It is not fear of the gods," said Mr. Dewey, "that has made us invent the gods!"

This is not a very tidy theory of life, nor a very nice attitude toward philosophy—so people may think who are accustomed to dwell in intellectual air castles. Dewey seems to deny all that is high and fine in life and all that is noble and enduring in philosophy. But that is just the point: he denies nothing. That is, he is not denying life, he is only denying the adequacy of any abstraction however fine to represent the whole of life. Abstractions, fine theories, intellectual air castles deny facts and dispense with reality. Professor Dewey naïvely accepts the whole of existence. He clings to reality and lets abstractions look out for themselves.

Thus Dewey does not deny that art, and the unity, form and symmetry of art exist, nor that they are the real objects of genuine appreciation. They are part of existence; in a sense no doubt they are its consummation. Beauty and symmetry are things to be enjoyed, the embellishments of hard-won leisure, the fruition of life. There is nothing unreal about them, nor illusory about the unity and symmetry that make beautiful things the objects of adoration in a world that is largely chaos.

The fallacy lies in their abstraction. When the unity and formal perfection which we have attained in art are sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought, then they cease to be a part of real existence and become an illusory means of escape. And no one can question that philosophy has sought this escape: it has taken form and type and shaken all the content out of them and held them up, pure and cold and empty, as the symbols of reality. The actual content of existence, including even the very arts from which perfection of form was learned, have been snubbed and ignored and left to exist only by oversight, just as Veblen says the peasants of the middle ages existed only by oversight. Thus the metaphysics of pure form which had its birth in the drama and the sculpture of the Greeks ran its course through the nobly appreciative philosophy of Plato and Aristotle only to come in the end to the puerilities of scholasticism. In the end the denial of the raw facts of actual existence—implicit from the beginning in a philosophy of pure form—became little more than a denial of this earth in the interest of a superstitious heaven and a denial of the serf in the interest of an ineffably superior overlord.

Modern civilization does not commit this particular sin of abstraction. Its characteristic mode of escape from the confusion of life is the unity of science, the imposing regularity of scientific law. Facts are the mainspring of the modern mind. Here are abstractions that work, theories that get things done—and no nonsense about beauty and appreciation. Nothing is denied by science except things that are not scientific: the consummations of life, the ends of existence, appreciation and contemplation!

And this is hardly strange. Science is a product of work. Labor, the need of man from the first sin, has found in modern thought its gospel and its creed. And machine technology is its ritual. With a scientific knowledge of how things work and a machine industry to make them work so, man has labored on a far vaster scale than ever before. As never before he has learned to control the wayward forces that surround him. Small wonder, then, that he should think that now at long last he has found reality.

But no! says Dewey, this is the old illusion of abstraction. The forces and masses and weights of science are all artificial. An atom is not a bit of reality; it is an abstraction. Or practically, it is a tool. It is an intellectual device for bringing something to pass—for controlling the events that chemists want to control. As a formula of the nature of existence, science is not reality; it is an escape from reality.

Reality, as it is naïvely presented to us, is indescribably rich. It affects us and we react to it in an incalculably complex variety of ways. The qualities of things that are of most immediate and real importance to us are those which we appreciate—those which we like or dislike, the qualities of things as ends and consummations of our love and hate. These are precisely the qualities which are ignored by science. Science is objective, that is to say, instrumental. In science there are no goals even of knowledge. The molecule was not a goal; the atom was not a goal; the electron—what is it but an instrument for knowing something

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else and doing something remotely and abstractly important?

In order to use things in this fashion science ignores everything sensible! The impact of the world upon our senses is necessarily given over for the more manageable and commensurable impacts of objects upon one another. The human element is notoriously eliminated from the calculation. The result is a tremendous intellectual tool, more potent than anything ever devised before, but with no sense to it. What could be more ridiculously remote from the realities of existence than the symbols of higher mathematics? Like the rude hieroglyphs of savages, they are a source of perpetual laughter among sensible people. For they have lost nearly all the savor of the salt of existence.

But the most deplorable result of scientific philosophizing has been its effect upon metaphysics. Because science has seemed to deal so successfully with the world of physical atoms and forces, and because it has so callously ignored the world of value and appreciation, philosophy has been given a fresh opportunity to make a metaphysics of contemplation. This time it is the philosophy of the spirit. Science has occupied the world, so philosophy withdraws into the soul. Thus the awful gulf between thought and things has come about—a gulf so wide that students lose their sight by gazing into it, so wide that both sides cannot possibly exist at the same time. Either science is right, so it would seem, and the world is a vast storehouse of energy and atoms with no meaning and no purpose and no sense at all; or metaphysics is right and the world is a universe of mind, full of thought and feeling, with not a thing in sight.

This is the dilemma upon which modern philosophy has stubbed its toe—a dilemma left in its path by science. For science set out to make life regular, to harness forces and control events and to make things behave. And it discovered very soon that it must abandon all sense of their relevance to human life. The meaning and significance of things in human life was far too complicated to be controlled. More than that: in the early days of science meaning and significance and appreciation were all tied up with the abstract philosophy of pure form, by then gone bad into mediaeval scholasticism; and that was something to be feared and distrusted by science; for it was actively obscurantist, ardently persecuting all attempts to call attention to the world of things—and selves. And so, as Professor Dewey said, "At a sweep of the arm of modern science all the meaning of existence was dumped over into human consciousness." And there it stayed and festered and produced the staggering dilemma of thought versus things.

This looks rather bad for science. If this were all science had to its credit we should do well to revive the gentle arts of the inquisition! But of course this is not all. As every one knows, Dewey is actually the prophet of modern science in philosophy. Indeed, I may have been guilty of a little harmless exaggeration just now to point a vivid contrast.

For rightly understood science is instrumental knowledge; it is not the absolute knowledge metaphysics seeks. This is the contrast. The theories which metaphysics abstracts from the confused reality of existence are theory for its own sake. They are what Mr. Dewey calls "consummatory" knowledge. To know them is to find a certain consummation of the struggle to make something out of life. They are framed to relieve and to edify the troubled soul. But in the nature of the case they are always partial and abstract and incomplete. No amount of philosophy can overlay and wholly cover up the fact that existence is what it is. Furthermore, as an escape from the reality of existence as it naïvely is, metaphysics is a poor thing, anyhow. "Men want stories which enthrall, not systems which explain!"

The only effective escape from the unsatisfactory waywardness of life is to take raw existence as it is and control it—to make it stand and deliver. And this is what men have done with science. By using the knowledge of science not as an edifying end in itself but as an instrument of control of the conditions of existence men have equipped themselves to wring more good out of life than has ever been possible before. This is the true function of knowledge: to be an instrument in the struggle against blind and fortuitous circumstance for the goods that are there too, the brighter half of existence as we find it.

This, it is clear, is the philosophy of political democracy and economic liberalism, and a paean of praise of industrial civilization. One can see plainly in such statements of his central ideas as these Carus Lectures why Dewey has become the spokesman of modern thought. He has harnessed himself proudly to those very forces in modern civilization about which most "thinkers," most men of classical training and conservative disposition, are rather fearful. He has caught the spirit of science as a solvent of the material and social conditions under which man lives.

And Dewey has caught the temper of science in another sense. He seems at the same time utterly fearless as a theorist, and as a man acutely deprecatory of his own personal influence and contribution. Such extravagant and uncritical tributes to his intellectual stature and personal predominance as Bourne's, in the famous article of seven years ago, embarrass him to the point of physical suffering. Yet with complete sang froid he declares all his predecessors to have been wrong. Like a true prophet, he seems conscious of a spirit working within him, of a greater than he speaking through his words. Like a true prophet—or like a scientist!

C. E. AYRES.

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The Sheltered Sex

ARNOLD HUTCHINS does not like onions. They are so offensive that he has issued a proclamation forbidding his wife to purchase or bring to the house or cause to be brought to the house, anything nearer the appearance of an onion than a narcissus bulb. Ann finds this very hard, for despite her gentle breeding she believes ardently in the onion as a factor in culinary success. Once or twice in the early days of their marriage she tried surreptitiously to introduce the flavor but he made such a fuss that she gave them up, forever.

Arnold objects to onions not only in his own home but in everyone else's. Since there is no law regulating apartment house cookery, when the family directly below engages in boiled onions and the people next door have a stew, Ann telephones the news to the office so that she and Arnold may go to a restaurant and remain away until the permeative odors have evaporated. When they are invited out for dinner, Ann hates to do it, but she tells her hostess beforehand, as casually as she can, how violently Arnold feels, and begs for an onionless meal.

Besides this matter of onions, Arnold feels so acutely on everything that concerns himself that he probably could not survive unless he were well protected. Before his marriage Mrs. Hutchins, Senior, mothered him so intensively that when she passed him to Ann, it was as a sacred trust. Outwardly, he was a big, robust man, with a powerful voice, but his mother regarded him as a delicate orchid or a fragile lily. Ann had a talent for music, and was hoping for a modest career even after marriage, but the job of shielding Arnold from the disturbing contacts of life has occupied all her time and effort in the last twenty years.

There are so many things to upset Arnold. He never wants to see any evidences of the processes of housekeeping or hear any of its details. If their one maid leaves suddenly, if the groceries fail to appear, if the ice-man is impertinent, Arnold mustn't know about it. He is tremendously offended at sight of a broom or dust-pan and while he wishes the house to be as perfect as a perpetual clean-up day crusade, processes must be secret, silent and automatic.

Among his many abhorrences are street noises. When automobiles honk and ambulances clang, Ann rushes to put down the windows. If newsboys roar and bellow an extra, their screeches make Arnold so angry that someone has to go down the street and buy them out or eject them forcibly from the block. As much as she can Ann comes between him and victrolas, piano players, barking dogs, music students, all the little accessories of city life.

It may be that Arnold is cherished with exceptional care. But the truth is that since the beginning, the whole feminine world has been in a conspiracy to shield and protect men. Only in fables of chivalry is woman the sheltered sex. Visit any American home and you will find grandmothers, mothers, wives, sisters, aunts, daughters and female servants consecrated to one great purpose—guarding the male members of the family from the vicissitudes of everyday life.

Shaw's Candida explained it in the scene between her preacher husband and Marchbanks, the poet, when she described the way James's mother and his three sisters had given their very lives to save him the trouble of doing anything but be strong and clever and happy. And, continuing the devoted task, she speaks the ideal of every true wife, "I build a castle of comfort and indulgence and love for him, and stand sentinel always to keep little vulgar cares out—"

It is generally supposed that a man suffers more acutely from being bored than a woman. A wife usually shields her husband from tiresome callers, duty engagements and all the disheartening round of communal life. Moreover, she takes the brunt of his relatives as well as her own. Lester Field, a kind-hearted soul, is a passionate son and brother. He is perpetually inviting his mother and the three unmarried daughters to come down from Palmyra and visit New York City.

The Field "girls" are exceptionally fatiguing. They all talk for self-expression at the same moment and one sister does not care a tinker's bit what another sister is saying. The oldest one has the loudest voice and the most self-determination so she succeeds most often in dominating the uproar. Mother Field is drab and plaintive with innumerable troubles pertaining to keeping house, the church and the misdoings of the neighborhood.

Helen Field, Lester's wife, was once a teacher and she supplements their income by tutoring. When his family comes, she arranges to have the children sleep on various couches and divans, gives up her own room as well, rises early to get breakfast and placate Bridget—who didn't bargain to cook for nine. Between hours of Caesar, Advanced French and Mathematics for the backward, she arranges sight-seeing expeditions, shopping tours, theatre parties and entertainments enough to make the in-laws feel that their visit is appreciated.

It would be vastly more endurable to Helen, with Lester's help. But invariably, within a few hours of the arrival, he develops unexpected business complications. He is kept late at the office, rushes in tardily for dinner, then with cheerful apologies darts away to mythical but tremendously important engagements. By adroit management, he succeeds in spending no time whatever with his relatives, although sentimentally he cherishes them and believes that their periodic invasions are a great thing—for Helen.

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There was a notion once, a survival of primitive sentiment, that by going out of the home to work, man took his courage in hand, and braved the elements. This, of course, is true no longer. The life of the business world, like that of the home, is built upon the theory of masculine protection. In every well regulated office, a cordon of women employees vie with each other to keep the outside world from permeating the inner sanctum. A young girl answers the telephone and prevents access of any but the acceptable; a woman secretary is always on duty as buffer and custodian of the sacred presence; feminine stenographers, bookkeepers and file clerks carry on the drab routine, while "he" sits majestically in an inner chamber.

Meanwhile, his wife may have had a day of heavy responsibility and hazard. With arrogant plumbers, temperamental painters, over-bearing carpenters to deal with, class-conscious delivery boys and grocers' clerks, the present pursuit of domestic tasks is both difficult and dangerous. Man had his troubles in the days when he roamed at large, hunting for food while lions roared and birds of prey swooped suddenly upon him. But all this is over. The battlefields have been transferred. Nowadays, while men go to quiet harbors of safety outside the home, their wives brave all the perils of rude and nerve-racking contacts, within it.

Naturally, this easy and secure life of man and his years of sheltered living, have made him more or less helpless. In many ways he could put a Victorian female to shame. Thrust suddenly into a kitchen, he stands appalled before the intricacies of a gas range. Thousands of able bodied men could not, if cast upon a desert island, prepare a meal for themselves. Bereft of women and restaurants they would undoubtedly starve to death. Nor is it uncommon for a virile, athletic man to pale before the process of counting, sorting and listing his laundry or gaze with a look of pathetic frustration at a button which has come off in the process of dressing.

Few men can function alone. They have been brought up, poor dears, not to do little, personal things for themselves. In daily processes, they've been taught that the greater their helplessness, the more their masculinity. Women have been their teachers. They enjoy the sense of man's dependence. They smile indulgently, even proudly, as they boast of the little awkwardnesses and ignorances of their male relatives. They have made men believe that to be unable to hold a needle or break an egg into a bowl is as precious a sign of maleness as woman's former feebleness in athletic sports was proof of her charm.

Someone has said that a woman goes through life with a baby in one arm and a husband in the other. She has made herself responsible for his physical well-being, but her nurture doesn't stop there. Every woman knows the process of psychological nursing, keeping men from feeling blue or discouraged or from falling down at times under the rigors of wage-earning.

"Taking care of my husband's egotism," said a frank and modern friend, "keeping it buttressed to the height where he is happy and self-sufficient is a bigger chore than all I do for my three babies put together."

"Why do it?" an unmarried companion put in.

"Because," said the sophisticated one, "you've got to bolster them up to make good providers of them. Let them develop an inferiority complex or a sense of discouragement, and they begin to fail all along the line. They go to pieces."

This was a blunt presentation of an antique process. Sirens may flatter for the moment, worldly women make conquests by adoration, but wives know the little, daily ways of keeping up a husband's morale. Methods differ. There was a man named Harold Hunt, who worked in a drygoods store in a Western city. He married a splendid, capable young woman, conceded by everyone to be a remarkable housekeeper. She wore trim little checked gingham dresses and was always on hand, smiling and neat to serve her husband his breakfast.

Harold, it seems had a passion for frilly garments. On their first anniversary, he bought her a rose-pink tea gown, a lustrous lacy and filmy garment, suitable for any Turkish harem. He told Bernice that it had been the dream of his life to have his wife wear such a robe, at breakfast, that for years his idea of perfect bliss was to have his toast and coffee, seated opposite a woman in a rose-pink tea gown. Bernice was touched. Although practical, she had her inner areas of romance. Next morning, she rose half an hour earlier than usual, prepared the breakfast in her gingham dress, put everything on the table, ran up stairs and donned the negligée.

Throughout the meal she tried to act as luxuriously and leisurely as she could, to make Harold feel like a capitalist with an idle wife and a host of servitors. As soon as he left for the store, she again dashed to her room, put back the gingham dress and set to, cleaning house and washing dishes. She kept this up for five years. Then, when Harold showed no symptoms of an earning capacity to sustain a pink silk tea gown in the setting to which such garments are accustomed, she revolted.

A woman's magazine might use her as an illustration of a careless creature who did not try to keep her husband's love, for there is a popular notion that a man can be "held" by certain prescribed and planned processes. It doesn't make much difference how it is done, as long as the sense of masculine importance is sustained.

According to recent scientific findings, it comes to this: man is secretly conscious of a biological

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inferiority, since he cannot bear children. Therefore, he must be continually propped up by those who do bear them, in order to feel a sure-enough place in the universe.

Women probably sensed this fact before psychologists brought it to the daylight, which accounts for their protection of him, even from himself. It's almost impossible to find any record of their real opinion about men. One woman, named Mary Astell, broke the silence in 1721 in a letter to a lady by a lady, where, with brutal candor, she divided men into groups of braggards and bullies, dandies and squires, and showed how, whatever their outward appearance, all were dependent upon women for daily comfort and happiness. This lone instance is proof of women's desire to shield men from discovery, for the book remained unknown and unread. Between then and now is stillness, vast, discreet and abysmal.

In contrast to this delicacy, whole libraries are filled with criticisms, analyses and interpretations of women, by men; while, during the crusade for suffrage, they were obliged to listen for hours to public discussion of their abilities and disabilities. It is doubtful if men could have survived such a series of campaigns for enfranchisement. They would probably have succumbed at the first general discussion of their frailties and weaknesses, the weighing and measuring of their capacities. Brutal broadsides on masculine limitations, comparable to the pronunciamentos of male anti-suffragists about women would have made them lie down from sheer ennui at the thought of living under such handicaps.

Taking into consideration all these ways that men have been protected and watched over, it is evident that they are wholly unprepared for the changes of modern life. They have been caught, suddenly, in a world turned topsy-turvy, so far as they are concerned. They have literally been thrown out of the nest with their wings and legs in such a rudimentary state that they cannot even hop successfully, much less fly. The burden of the whole course of feminism has fallen upon them. Born and brought up under the old regime, they are now faced, almost overnight with an entirely new system of living. Most women are out of the home, one way or another; so much occupied with new duties that their old ones go by default, and it is constantly getting worse. Every day, for instance, some woman like Ann Hutchins decides to protect her Arnold no longer from the insidious onion. Every week, some Helen Field decides to leave a Lester to fate and the attentions of his gregarious family. As for man's egotism, that too, is being left to shift for itself. It is becoming the fashion to "expose" men in fiction, scold them, make fun of them, write about their characteristics, with the white gloves off. The more daring magazines have even published confessions of wives or articles, "What's the matter with the Modern Man?"

Hardest of all, in this world of changing relationships, is the situation which puts man in the passive rôle. The new woman is creating herself, freely and happily, but the new man is being created, much against his will. Since it's being done to him, he has none of the zest of adventure. His part is that of waiting and watching, which has heretofore been the right of woman. He is no longer the player, but in the tragic status of the played upon. Every day he finds himself affected in astonishing ways by forces over which he has no control or direction.

Ultimately the woman movement should result in the emancipation of man. In the meantime, he is going through a miserable evolutionary process. He is caught between an old and a new civilization. It is no easy thing to be a man, nowadays.

FLORENCE GUY WOOLSTON.

On Senesis' Mummy

Then, too, when beauteous Senesis
Lived, no lovely thing there was
Much less mortal than a rose,
And all dancing and all limbs
Had their dark and mortal close.

Lovers said then too of death
How more than the worm's mouth was owing
One that drew a flower of lust;
And then were no such churls to yield
Delicacy like hers to dust.

So perfect now and bodily
She lies lapped in cedarwood.
Her still breasts are garlanded,
And a gilded mask is over
Her cold, shapely, dreamless head.

O quick thing left thus as death stilled her,
O ebony-straight, the painted slaves
Still all the ritual treasure bring.
Their mournful antique bodies make
A grave and lovely gesturing.

Surely then too when Senesis
Lived, life was a piercing thing;
Bright life, on which long darkness wars;
And living then, to their brimmed hearts
Came a sweet wondering at stars.

They learnt how soon the petals fall
On Egypt's or on any waters;
How being that suckles chilly fear
Is lovelier so, and dearest beauty
As brief a jewel as a tear.

How with this wisdom would they leave her,
A thousand and a thousand springs,
Lying with a stony heart;
Nor ever suffer her sweet breast
To drop as blossoms do apart?

LÉONIE ADAMS.

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Marketing Expressionism

The Adding Machine, by Elmer L. Rice. The Garrick Theatre. March 19, 1923.

ON the whole the Theatre Guild, I think, was right to put on The Adding Machine. For one thing, the piece makes clear for the dullest spectator what expressionism is, in so far as it is a method at all or is merely a section of the old elastic poetic method in the theatre. Expressionism, evidently, from The Adding Machine, is a theatrical method by which any means whatever, whether actual or ever seen or heard, may be used to reveal the content of a dramatic moment, to hit up the high lights, to give us the very soul of the incident. Whatever else he gets from Mr. Rice's play the dreariest fool can now understand expressionism as a theatrical method. For another thing, the Theatre Guild has given itself an opportunity for thoroughness and freedom in producing a piece where there is no real imaginative demand or spiritual exaction but much opportunity for ingenious illustration. The direction of The Adding Machine goes for the most part trimly and expertly. The settings—except for the Elysian interval, which lacks the poetry of its idea and in its design has too little music, vista and serene delight—are highly expert, inventive, bang-up and professional. In them Mr. Simonson does a needed service to our stage by making them come off so thorough-goingly and so completely. And finally the acting is, taken all in all, though this need not be true of the single rôles, on a sounder general level of excellence than any play I have seen at the Garrick in a long time, in spite of Mr. Calvert, who brings to the last scene that strange tedium with which he helped stifle the last act of R. U. R., an odd effect of self-complacency and of flat totality that makes one's very breathing heavy. Mr. Dudley Digges, in the court scene especially, repeated too much, without any real invention, without registering any secure impression or idea; but he gave a good performance of the leading rôle, certainly better than the writing of it was. Part of Mr. Digges' trouble was owing to the play's running too often to mere babble and often to mere farce. And this farcicality sometimes troubled Mr. Edgar Robinson also, as in the matricidal remorse scene, though his playing was otherwise admirable. Miss Helen Westley took up the squalid acidity of Mrs. Zero with genuine witty abandon and, what's more, with a growing expertness in letting us know what her comment on the character was, that is to say in technical expression. And Miss Margaret Wycherly gave what was the best performance in the lot and what was one of the best things of the season. This of course was partly because the rôle of the old maid clerk was written better than any other in the play, but more because of Miss Wycherly's conception. In that fine scene where she comes to Mr. Zero in Elysium and no longer cares what she tells about herself and her love for him, Miss Wycherly made out of the moment a kind of complete, gauche poetry. It was crude and radiant at the same time; you got the sense of some cracked, ugly, dumb hands that had suddenly grown beautiful for what they carried.

The Adding Machine, in so far as it is anything but theatre, tells the story of a poor, dry respectable creature, merely Mr. Zero, who for twenty-five years has sat at a desk adding up checks, without an advance in salary, with no change of any sort except the drying up and souring of his wife. In the first scene Mr. Zero lies in bed while his wife gets her personal chores done, laces up her corsets, rolls her hair in curling kids, rails at her husband's nonentity and the uptown movies, and takes off her stockings. In the next scene the clerk who loves him and who has grown faded with him, sits opposite Mr. Zero calling off the checks. Their thoughts, their retorts, their dust and ashes of emotion, appear as they go on through to the sound of the whistle that ends the empty sum of the day. The boss comes to say that Mr. Zero will not be needed longer, adding machines are to be installed; and at that Mr. Zero goes wild and kills the boss. Next comes a party at the Zeros', in places a very amusing contrivance of the dramatist's, where Messrs. One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six come with Mrs. One, Mrs. Two, Mrs. Three, Mrs. Four, Mrs. Five, Mrs. Six; all sizes and kinds of men and women but all dressed alike, all equally stale, all of a moron public, all ending their newspaper platitudes that pass for conservation by rising and singing My Country 'Tis of Thee, Sweet Land of Liberty! Then the officer comes for Mr. Zero. The trial scene then appears, as Mr. Zero sees it. He pleads his case and is found guilty. Then the graveyard, and Mr. Zero rises from his grave to talk with a man who has killed his mother. Then the Elysian Fields, and Mr. Zero, to his surprise, finds himself there with the matricide and with his old deskmate, who has killed herself to follow Mr. Zero out of the world. They talk, Mr. Zero and the woman, they have now a chance of being forever together, they hear there at last the music that only those may hear who belong to the happy place. But Mr. Zero, unable to bear the idea of not being respectable—he is a married man and the same throughout eternity or what will people say?—runs off. Finally he is exhibited with a gigantic adding machine, happy in heaven with sum after sum, punch after punch, till, unexpectantly, he is sent back to earth again for another try at life.

Set out like that, The Adding Machine sounds like no small expression of life and life's drab progression through mere number and incident, its slovenly half-said dreams, its sin against the spring and surge of vitality in human beings. As a matter of fact The Adding Machine has very little to say about any of its incidents. There is no central idea to the play except in a sort of reflected sense, a clutter of facile recollections of Main Street, Liliom, Peer Gynt, From Morn to Midnight, Bernard Shaw, Schnitzler and a lively, impertinent and often vulgar journalism. There is no guiding taste throughout the play and no security of intellectual cultural attack. There is no controlling beauty or poignancy that might serve to excuse the most unequal variation, in insight or in pathetic sympathy or in accuracy of observation, that arises in almost every scene as the play gets on toward its more or less unmeaning denouément. But there are well written moments here and there in The Adding Machine. Some of the conjugality of the first scene is sharp and jolly. The first five minutes where Mr. Zero meets the man who has killed his mother with the carving-knife is done with great effect. The scene at the adding desk, between the assistant and Mr. Zero, is safe and sure, obvious but successfully put and true. And the scene where Mr. Zero talks with the woman in Elysium, the first two thirds of it, up to the place where he gets respectable and runs away, is beautifully and movingly written. And the whole play shows an unusual theatrical instinct, as Mr. Rice's On Trial did, external mostly but with a sharp eye for business and making matters hum.

But what seems to me interesting as regards The Adding Machine is this—a thing that hovers around so much of

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the world of art though it is not often so happily illustrated as here in Mr. Rice's play—it is a success gained by exploiting for extraneous purposes a method that in itself has a revealing and inner necessity for being. I mean to say that expressionism in so far as it has any reason for existence at all and in so far as it is a distinct method of dramatic writing, must exist or can be employed solely because it is the only means by which some section of experience can be fully revealed. It exists because it is the only form that suits the artist's state of mind, his soul. Any method, if it happens to be a fresh or unfamiliar form, will trouble the public somewhat, since the dialect used is not yet easily understood. The public tends to resist it, to jeer or strain away from it, to suspect it of some decadent evil. But if you take the method more or less to itself, without any bother of content to be got at, if you play up the method's novelties and tricks, in other words dramatize the method's character and ways, you may get something highly diverting and easy. "Commercialize" is the word many people use for this. But "commercialize" does not express what Mr. Rice has done. What he has done is to write a play not so much about life as about expressionism. He gets up a theatre piece in which we see what expressionism does through seven scenes. In art every true use of any method is a mystery. It is a means of drawing out the mystery of men and events. It happens as life happens, some of it knowable, some of it alive miraculously and unknowably. Its truth appears, as life appears, through its being necessary and inevitable and mysterious. But in The Adding Machine Mr. Rice makes it clear that this method of dramatic art is only a game like any other game —which of course every art method is up to a certain point—he lets us all play at it together from the outside. He uses the expressionism not so much to reveal as to entertain. What another man might struggle to force into a revelation of his state of soul, the author of The Adding Machine brings smartly to market.

STARK YOUNG.

The Thespian Whale

HERE is a motion picture (Down to the Sea in Ships) in which the chief rôles are taken by humans and whales. Naturally, one's first reflection is how much more skilfully the latter play their parts.

What the people do is all one dark confusion of turgid melodrama—moron heroine, hero with the chest-heaves, half-caste villain of a pathological wickedness. There are also such movie stereotypes as cherry trees in bloom; and why the basket of puppies is omitted, I can't imagine. The Wild Night Ride through the Rain is there; so is Your Lover Is Dead and You Are in Me Powah; so is Halt! I Forbid This Marriage. . . . But the whales! How simple, how able, how thrillingly absorbing is their work! I wish every ox-eyed leading man could study the technique of the 90-ton bull rushing through the water like the father of all submarines; and Stanislavsky himself could learn from the scene where he turns and charges the small boat from which he has been harpooned, spilling crew and impedimenta into old ocean amid the genuine blood and all too genuine sharks.

Before we seek to solve the puzzle of the superior thespian whales it is worth while to pause a moment for another matter of some sociological significance. This film is a genuine community effort; it was made by a group of citizens of New Bedford, sons and grandsons of the old whalemen, desirous of securing a pictorial record of the lives of their hardy sires before those great old days are quite forgotten. The square-rigged ship which bears down upon the camera under full press of sail so thrillingly was built in 1842. Many of the costumes are equally authentic, having been resurrected from New Bedford attics and worn, so the veracious press agent assures me, by lineal descendants of their first possessors. Verisimilitude is not art; yet in this case the producer has succeeded in giving us, in the story of the whaling cruise itself, the scenes on board ship and those in the small boats after the whales are sighted, a record just as veracious, and stronger in the impression it leaves of the externals of the whaler's life than is Melville's Moby Dick—though no motion picture, of course, can be as great art as that book. In other words, the camera has here been used to perform the task for which above all others, it is fitted: To portray a little-known phase of life, accurately, completely and vividly, and to reach, as any statistical comparison of audiences proves, a thousand persons for every one who has the mental energy and persistence to read a book of comparable quality.

Recognizing that this is true, the spectator of a warm-hearted, uplifting turn of mind may rise with the indignant inquiry why the splendid whales were subjected to interruption by such deplorable human beings. The answer to the question exactly indicates the greatest weakness of this little sister of the arts today.

These grandsons of New Bedford invested a considerable number of thousands of dollars in the making of their film. Being canny New Englanders they dislike to expend their money without hope of getting it back. One may wish they had been willing to sacrifice themselves on the stony altar of art; but the choice was theirs to make. To earn its way, a motion picture must be shown in a large number of theatres; which means that it must be admired and accepted by some thousands of exhibitors, both on their own account and on behalf of their audiences, whom they imagine to be on the intellectual level of a not very high-grade moron.

You can realize the limitation thus imposed if you will suppose that books could only be bought from a bookseller who sold copies of a single volume during each week, and yet must sell some thousands of them to keep afloat; a bookseller who, it is not unlikely, spent his early life in one or another aspect of the show business and is personally a heated admirer of Harold Bell Wright and Elinor Glyn. If books were sold under these conditions and no other, what chance to reach the public would be enjoyed by George Meredith, or W. H. Hudson, or Lafcadio Hearn?

Exactly. What we need, in the first place, is motion picture theatres which are shooting at people on various levels of intelligence. We also need repertory theatres where the best films of the past (and there are a few good ones) may be resurrected at frequent intervals, so that a brilliant and sincere piece of work in this medium shall not die after a few months. Until something like this is accomplished, the very greatest potential device for universal education and recreation must remain potential merely; and you must endure a fifty percent adulteration of melodrama when you wish to see leviathan, black, slick and glistening, heave his monstrous bulk through the waves.

BRUCE BLIVEN.

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CORRESPONDENCE

The Discovery of the Shropshire Lad

SIR: At the close of your able and sensitive review of the Last Poems of A. E. Housman, Mr. William A. Norris concludes that the work of Housman appeals to an acute but small group.

I remember a good many years ago introducing The Shropshire Lad to Mr. Norris; at a time when the number of those interested in that volume would have been hard to calculate, for the reason that Mr. Housman not only took no royalties, but failed even to copyright his work. By all indications, however, the sale of his little book even then considerably exceeded that of work by poets whose appeal seemed much more popular; and today, it is safe to say, however much it may surprise one, that Housman is a popular poet. His Last Poems have already sold over 20,000 copies in England.

In connection with Mr. Housman's attitude toward his verse, may I be permitted a reminiscence? In 1903, when I was on the editorial staff of McClure's magazine, Miss Viola Roseboro of the staff brought The Shropshire Lad to my excited attention. Since at that time the book was only beginning to be known in America, Mr. S. S. McClure added his enthusiasm to Miss Roseboro's and mine and reprinted in his magazine a considerable number of poems from the little book. This was in itself an unusual procedure, as was perhaps the next move in the story: the dispatch of a check to Mr. Housman for poems reprinted from an uncopyrighted book. But the most unusual part of it all was the response from Mr. Housman: the return of the check with the remark that he never accepted money for his verse. Mr. Housman at that time was on the faculty of the University of London, and professors' incomes are not large.

This anecdote is not only interesting in itself, but may intimate a part of the reason why Mr. Norris was wrong in his impression as to the scope of Housman's popularity.

WITTER BYNNER.

Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Headlines from Boston

SIR: Below is a sample of journalism that is as prevalent in these parts as it is little appreciated by the newspaper readers. It is taken from the Boston Evening Transcript, that standby of New England conservatism.

SHOULD END SHOP STRIKE

President Harding Tells the Union Officials

Blames Strike for Prevailing Coal Shortage

Also for Unsatisfactory Railroad Conditions

Continuance, on Some Roads, Without Reason

The headline could not have been written as it was by mere chance. An editorial which appeared the following day in the Transcript is one proof, and the second is that the Transcript bulletin board outdid the headline by proclaiming in bold letters that "President Harding Assails Striking Shop Crafts," or words to that effect. There was no doubt left in the reader's mind.

The interest in this particular case is simply that it is an average sample of the methods employed by the Transcript. Of course, we all know that "newspaper ethics" are practically nonexistent, but when a newspaper prides itself on its respectability as the Transcript does, and prints at the head of its editorial column the sentiments of George Washington regarding virtue and morality being the necessary spring of popular government, etc., it seems as if that newspaper should once in a while be disclosed in its true light.

Though the Transcript's circulation is strictly limited, its readers make the claim of getting the fullest and most authentic reports of all news. Many of them agree that they extract most of their information from the Transcript's headlines, which are set up in such an unending tier that the reader is too tired to go further after finishing them. Hence the double evil of the above.

GARDNER JACKSON.

Cambridge, Massachusetts.

All At One Dose

SIR: Income tax return day, just safely past, induces thought. This idea has been occurring to me ever since the world war. Why not take of the property of every citizen proportionately, enough to pay off the entire war, and be rid of the whole annoyance? If it cannot be all paid in one year, then spread it over, say, five years, one fifth of each one's proportion every year of that period. When the war came upon us, every citizen who was of fighting age, rich or poor, had his life pledged to win it, and so also was every bit of property in the nation tacitly pledged to win it. Then why not make that property pay for it now?

B. S. RODEY.

Albuquerque, New Mexico.

What Do We Mean — "Christian"?

SIR: As a man, not of Jewish faith, but of Jewish descent, I want to protest most emphatically against the use of the word "Christian" in your editorial Rewriting the Treaty Downward. What right have you to speak of Christian vision of fair dealing? Give me one single instance in the last two thousand years when it was practised by any Christian nation. "The fundamental principle of democratic and Christian politics—which is government by consent." How can you make such an absurd claim? From the time of the Crusades, to begin no earlier, which deserve to be remembered chiefly for the slaughter of the Jews on the Rhine, down to the pogroms in Russia, the Greek activity in Minor Asia and the lynchings in the United States, the fundamental principle of Christian politics was murder and cruelty. The idea of appropriating the name of the makers of the world war for what is, in fact, not Christian at all but just plain human decency, to which your Moslem, Jew, Hindu, etc., is at least as near as the Christian!

ALBERT HIRST.

New York City.

A Divided Supreme Court

SIR: Your article on decisions by a divided Supreme Court, in your issue of March 14th, involves a fallacy that has several times appeared in your columns.

You recognize that the court has announced the rule "that every doubt shall be resolved in favor of the constitutionality of a law." Your next sentence is "Surely the fact that three or four judges of the court consider the law constitutional should raise enough doubt in the minds of their brethren to bring the rule into operation."

Since you are discussing a remedy which would apply to cases where no dissenting opinion is filed it is fair to assume that your ground for stating that three or four judges consider the law constitutional is found simply in the fact of their dissent. If, however, you will refer to the announced rule you will see that the dissent may mean that the three or four while agreeing with the majority in considering the law unconstitutional, feel doubts which, under the rule, they resolve in favor of constitutionality. Dissent means doubt, not, as you assume, that the minority consider the law constitutional.

Surely the presence of doubt in four minds need not raise doubt in five other minds that feel none.

HERBERT BEBB.

Chicago.

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Gold of Memory

Earlham, by Percy Lubbock. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

ADMIRERS of Mr. Lubbock's able and penetrating book on The Craft of Fiction were, among other things, grateful to him for not consigning various novels to Realism, or Romanticism, or Naturalism, as one might send patients to this or that ward of a hospital. They soon forgot this more negative side of their admiration as they followed him step by step around some full sized novel, War and Peace for instance, and watched it take different shapes from different angles, like a mountain. Here at last, one felt, was a guide really interested in the structure of mountains and not at all in how they should be divided into snow mountains and rock mountains.

Mr. Lubbock saw novels not as final, classifiable lumps, but as things which had grown from within outward, as composed or accumulated products of design and accident in varying proportions. In other words he saw them less as "works of art" than as the result of human minds sifting and rearranging the material of life. Just where this mind stood in relation to its material was for him the important question, the key to how they become what they seem, the key to why some of them are great. At what distance does the novelist stand from his characters, his narrative? Some novelists are looking with their own eyes through their characters as through a mask, others, once they have created them, leave their characters to grow and move by themselves; and still others give them as much freedom as may be enjoyed at the end of a six-foot leash. Or on the other hand the author may seem to be giving his characters and his story an unchanging amount of freedom throughout, but will consciously or unconsciously change their appearance by stepping up close to them or away from them, by changing the focus of his recording lens, or by turning the crank of the camera at such a speed that details fade into the general background of a narrative in which years, rather than days, are the milestones. The novelist may place himself at a number of angles, and the angle he chooses determines more than we realize what quality the story has for us, its readers.

What angle, what distance from the subject, what relation to it, are the most effective and moving? Surely it all depends on who is doing the writing, and what he is writing about. Yet it would have been enormously interesting to have had from Mr. Lubbock, himself so expert an analyst of the methods of others, an example of the novelist's craft. But Earlham is autobiographical, and, though it proves that there are a number of questions to be decided, by one who is about to tell his own story, not unlike the questions before someone about to tell the story of others, we shall wait for Mr. Lubbock's novel impatiently. In the meanwhile here is Earlham to convince us of a very high order of skill.

The first rough impression of Earlham is of something intangibly vague, beautiful and distant, as of scenes caught sight of by human vision down a more than human vista of years. The scenes all melt into one another; each scene, or unframed picture, is a composite of a number of scenes. Each figure is caught, not at any one moment, but in a general sum of moments. No event seems to have happened, when one is through, nor can one recall any anecdote, nor any memory that had a particular date. The atmosphere of some summer afternoon hangs over all these memories, covering, blurring, glorifying all of them in a haze. Where a clearer air would be poignant, this golden bluish haze is affectionate, reminiscent. In it recollection is quite divorced from regret. And this tranquil golden air never stirs, never parts to show the corner of a sharp or ugly memory.

This is design on Mr Lubbock's part, one feels sure. Not that he wants to suppress anything. But pleasant memories as a rule are general, and harsh or poignant ones are particular, and anything of the particular would be out of focus in his picture. Here is where we discover his skill at last: this picture of his childhood is in exactly the same focus throughout—an extraordinary feat. Think of the ordinary autobiography, think of what you remember of your own life. Vague, blurred beginnings, a stretch of blankness punctuated by trivial, by startling, beautiful, but always miscellaneous memories, increasing in number and miscellany as they draw near your own time of life. Certainly not a picture, any more than travelling along a straight road and looking backwards at the gathering, dwindling telegraph poles would make a picture. Mr. Lubbock has chosen to look at this past as if it were all equally distant from his eye, all almost equally important, all equally without sharp detail of time or place. Where others have made a collection of memories and called it a past, he has made a past by whittling away the separate memories, by mixing them together and with large, even brush strokes painting, out of them all, one picture. A little like a narrow mural painting it is, around the continuous wall of a very large circular room, and memory's palette has not left bare a single inch of it. The end of it would fit perfectly into the beginning, because it has not moved in point of time. If one could remember a book in the way one looks at a picture, the way to look at Earlham would be to stand in the middle of the room and sweep it slowly with the eye, as a panorama. Then its basic color, its screen of golden haze, would delight the eye, and through the haze composite memories, like bright distant statues, dark distant trees, would arise, each for its appointed moment in the eye. But since one must read rather than look, the pattern, or rather the singularly equal distance of the whole is not easily kept in mind. This does not make Earlham, for all its beauty, an easy book to read.

Beside this singular command of distance, this rare talent for melting details into an impression, there is more individual loveliness, more memorable little pictures within the larger picture, than I have allowed you to guess. Mr. Lubbock has a flow of words as steady, deep, continuous as an English stream. All his words are parts of the same whole, and he rarely is so carried away that one lingers over them; he rarely gives away, in describing anything, to that thrill he confesses: "the thrill of the sound of words, so piercing, so rending that it is hardly to be called a pleasure, though for the moment all the world is worthless in comparison with it."

In contrast with those autobiographies in which the past is a long darkness from which emerge dim but rescuable fragments, casual apparitions of half-remembered faces, faded tragedies, the first and last acts of time-eaten comedies, a few cries, a few songs and voices, all jumbled together in the procession of lost days both good and useless to remember, this ordered composite of all that is brightest and most pleasant to recall can be hung, like an only picture, on the wall of memory. ROBERT LITTELL.

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Vestigial Economics

Supply and Demand, by Hubert D. Henderson. The Cambridge Economic Handbooks, edited by J. M. Keynes. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. $1.25.

IN the year of Our Lord nineteen hundred and twenty-two the appearance of a book upon Supply and Demand is an event. In this sophisticated age this naïve venture is as exotic as a volume upon Blood Letting, The Flatness of the Earth, The Eternality of the Absolute or In His Image. Its anachronistic appearance is the more perplexing because it is the initial volume of a series of "handbooks," under the general editorship of Mr. John Maynard Keynes, wherein "the more distinguished of the younger economists" of Cambridge seek to present the realities of the economic order and of economic method. Its character lies in its belated attempt to introduce the general reader to the bewildering economic world in which he lives by way of "the laws of supply and demand." Its value inheres, not in its exposition, which is excellent; or in "its contribution to learning," which is nil; but in its wonderful revelation of the predicament into which neo-classical economics has fallen in recognizing in an unguarded moment the realities of modern industrialism.

There was a time, as all of us who once trod the syllogistic path to economic verity well know, when "the laws of supply and demand" led to all that was worth knowing about the organization of industrial society. The system which we learned was contrived by men whose minds were all agog over the discovery of "law and order" in nature and who were determined to ensnare "the natural laws" of the economic order. They had good heads, crude assumptions, and the dialectic of metaphysics as raw material. By dint of effort they showed that a natural process of competition, seller vying with seller and buyer with buyer, gave to each article and to each service its "normal" price. Moreover, by a train of argument which was faulty only in its assumptions, they proved that "the laws of supply and demand" found expression in a series of prices which converted things economic into a gigantic, cooperative, orderly system. They showed beyond their own peradventures that the economic order was an "automatic self-regulating mechanism." But with men who believed that order was goodness the argument could not stop here. So back of demand they placed utility and back of supply disutility. Then, by an elaborate logical ritual, they proved that "normal prices," the creatures of "the laws of supply and demand," exacted from the limited resources of the community the maximum of utilities at the minimum of costs. Through the normal action of their natural laws they made of our system the perfect economy. To "the great explanation" they added "the great apology."

The gods who lord it over intellectual endeavor must have waited impatiently to see what would happen when a mechanical economics of metaphysical speculation encountered modern thought and modern industrial reality. The crisis was met in three characteristic ways.

One group of economists, wise in their day and very far-sighted, espied fact from afar and refused to allow their highly articulate system to be contaminated by vulgar reality. They chose instead to satisfy their cravings for intellectual adventure in doctrinal controversies over subtle points which created the joyous illusion of the contestants being as far apart as the poles. This group includes several of the better-known economic theorists in this country.

Another group, conscious that modern fact would come with a flood, gave up the old doctrines, tried to make method square with modern thought, redefined theory as the larger generalizations about the economic order, and set themselves to the modest task of making a beginning of realistic economics. They did not reject the whole of the older doctrine, but they demanded that each bit which sought acceptance should present credentials of more substance than simple faith. In this group are to be included perhaps a majority of the younger men in this country who are interested in economic theory.

The third group, captivated by the beauty and symmetry of the older system, convinced that beauty is truth, and yet worried by the appearance of disturbing facts, set about incorporating the reality of today into the speculative economics of yesterday. Since facts came slowly to their introspective minds they little saw in yielding to the first temptation the ruin of all that they held dear. This group is best typified by "the Cambridge school" which, in spite of its slight influence upon public opinion, dominates professional economics in England. It is because of the perfect way in which it typifies the results of the compromise of economic metaphysics with economic fact that Mr. Henderson's book is so valuable.

The two ingredients of which the argument is made is each good enough of its kind. The dialectic procession of order in economic matters, the "laws of supply and demand," the grounding of prices in "utility," the remuneration of "land," "risk-bearing and enterprise," "land" and "capital" as special cases of a market formula, and the other principles and tricks which in our college days make economics intellectually as stimulating as poker, has rarely been exhibited in more eloquent phrases. The assortment of bits of realism which fill the gaps in the speculative argument are all from the world of here and now. It includes such things as an appreciation of the effect of inequality in the division of income upon market prices, a recognition of the importance of corporate savings, an admission of the immobility of labor, an assignment of a rôle to the trade union in the making of wage rates and to the state in the control of market prices, and the denial of any attempt to justify the prevailing economic order. In fact it is only fair to say that it is hard to find an introduction to economic theory which contains so much realism. It is a pity that excellence heaped upon excellence should result only in confusion.

It is curious that the injection of only a small amount of the stuff of reality should give a vestigial character to the older body of doctrine. In the economics of the system-builders there was no waste material; each concept, each assumption, each bit of polemic had a place and a purpose. Each was a bit of an argument that there was an economic order and that it was good. The economics of good repute justified interest by making it a payment for the travail of abstinence or waiting involved in the birth of capital. Mr. Henderson finds the rate of interest necessary only as a guide to the use of capital, retains its cost in waiting to no good purpose, and compromises with modern practice by dubbing the "corporate surplus" "involuntary savings." The older economists regarded particular rates of wages as beneath their notice, bent their efforts to explaining "the general rate," and by assuming the perfection of competition and the unimpeded mobility of labor evolved a "law of wages." Mr. Henderson begins his discussion of "Labor" with the general law of wages, and then cuts away its support by doubting the perfection of competition, denying the mobility of labor and giving

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to the trade union a necessary rôle in the making of wage-rates. The men who invented the older doctrines grounded price in "marginal utility" to the end that they might prove that the economic order extracted the greatest amount of utility from limited resources. Mr. Henderson recognizes that so long as persons possess pocketbooks of different sizes, the several amounts which they can pay for an article are not indicative of the respective utilities to them. As a result he makes price an expression of the marginal utility to each purchaser. Needless to say this shortcircuits his "utility," makes it an empty and clanging term, and leaves the utilities of purchasers in a relation to price which is as accidental as their weights, the quality of their clothes or their tastes in travel. Such examples as these, and their number is legion, indicate how at the touch of reality the older concepts loosen, the thread of dialectic is broken and the articulate fabric of a tough system falls to pieces. The final terms of his argument cease to be the resting places of an economic explanation. They remain as vestiges, magical polysyllables, the terms of professional erudition, words without significance or meaning in an inquiry with a purpose.

The confused character of Mr. Henderson's thought and language is even more apparent in his discussion of "the laws of supply and demand." In the grim and hard-headed old systems of yesterday they were the bone and sinew of economic verity. A theorist could show that they had governed the economic life of Robinson Crusoe on his desert island and that without drawing heavily upon his resources in dialectic. And, after a moment of terror at the prospect, the same theorist could plausibly explain their necessary use in a socialistic state. Since the theorist knew no psychology, regarded man as "a globule of desire," and thought of his mind as a calculating machine, the mysteries of human conduct imposed no barrier between the terms of his formulas. By the Almighty, his laws were eternal and immutable and he was ready any day to match truths with any physicist in the land.

It is not economics which has taken away the meaning of the laws of supply and demand which Mr. Henderson tries so valiantly to preserve. It is rather psychology, which he insists is a thing apart from all matters economic. But the truth is that any "law" which depends for its effect upon the appreciation of certain facts by many individuals, their judgments about these facts, their actions which result, and the consequences of these has no valid claim to even a remote kinship with natural law. Nor can an explanation which runs in terms of such conglomerates as "supply" and "demand" be called a "law." The device of a system of changeable prices is an excellent one for mediating between the production of wealth and its use; but it is a device. Where it is used there will doubtless be some tendency for "supply" and "demand" to meet at a price. But professionals are not required to discover so obvious a "truth"—or is it a truism? The hard hearted but hard headed theorist of old made no grudging argument for the perfection and goodness of an economic order based upon the absolute and eternal laws of supply and demand. But when Mr. Henderson tones down competition, gets economic phenomena moving involuntarily, disclaims a defence of the existing order and then proclaims his discovery of order among matters economic and insists that "The laws of supply and demand represent what is socially desirable now or under any system," we find his statements a mere verbal shell of a departed argument that holds neither truth nor significance.

This volume is another proof of the statement that the economics of the schools tends to run to seed in a few generations. Since it bears the official stamp of the Cambridge school, it seems to testify that at this citadel of economics there exists ignorance of almost all the literature of economic theory of the last fifteen years. Since "the more distinguished of the younger economists" at Cambridge are the products of a discipline at which they have never looked critically from without, their own mental habits stand between them and the economic reality of modern industrialism. Besides, they have a vested interest in defending a doctrinal system which is to some extent associated with the name of Cambridge. For these reasons, in England at least, in the near future the significant work in economics is likely to come out of Oxford. An English economist, as well known here as at home, recently stated in a letter, "The lectures at Oxford have been so damned dull that no one has attended and a school of economics has never got established. For that reason Oxford is fertile soil for the 'new' economics." The truth is as often as not against sound pedagogy; and there is little doubt that the dullness which kept men away from economics at Oxford has made a far more substantial contribution to the subject than the excellent instruction at Cambridge. For out of Oxford have already come Tawney, Clay, Hammond and Cole—to mention only the most conspicuous—all of them untutored in the older economic discipline and all of them with real contributions to an understanding of the economic order to their credit. It is perhaps their lack of special economic training which enables them to see reality clearly and not through the darkened glass of a semi-metaphysical system which was never intended to explain our economic world. The truths which they proclaim may never satisfy Mr. Henderson's demand for "laws"; for they are hedged about with too many peradventures to be set down in italics, much less in the black faced type which he reserves for his choicest verities. Nor will they meet his requirement that a truth to be true must satisfy a "sense of symmetry." But they are far more than the vestiges of an apologetic explanation of an economic order that is gone.

WALTON H. HAMILTON.

Paint

Paint, by Thomas Craven. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. $2.00.

THOSE who have followed Mr. Thomas Craven's keen and indefatigable criticism in the New Republic and the Dial will greet Paint as a fresh criticism of art; those who come to Paint without preparation will find in it—as one used to say—a criticism of life. Paint has all the conciseness and pith and intelligence of Mr. Craven's reviews; in addition, it has a good share of the qualities that make a first rate piece of fiction. I will not damn it with more violent praise.

The neglected artist is a conventional figure in sentimental fiction; and in a recent crop of autobiographies this theatrical canker-worm has raised its head in another field; so that if Paint were regarded only from the standpoint of theme and scenery one might be prepared to weep crocodile tears over a brummagem tragedy—and drown the taste in one's mouth with a strong cup of coffee. Needless to say, Mr. Craven's artist is not the diabetic, sugar-and-blood creature of current fiction; neither is his art a vague miracle which one must accept on the author's word;

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nor yet is his relation to society filled with nameless, imaginary grievances. Mr. Craven has given us instead a sharp glimpse of the real thing, in outlines as dexterous and unrelenting as his hero's pictures: indeed, the very stench of the studio seeps through the narrative, as if the manuscript had lain around until it was spattered with color and impregnated with turpentine and stale tobacco smoke.

The story of Paint spans the decade that elapsed between the return of the painter, Carlock, from Paris to his final extinction in 1921. His art develops; his spirit toughens; his body weakens; the man dies. The pattern is worked out with an almost geometric sense of proportion. Carlock's plans, Carlock's difficulties, Carlock's exhibitions, Carlock's criticism of his fellows and society, Carlock's picaresque adventures in his mere hovel of a studio above a saloon—these elements create a sharp mosaic of detail out of which the theme finally emerges. Carlock gets support for his faith in himself, and a steady supply of bacon and bread, from a coarse, tender, hankering creature, his model, Nettie: by her aid he is able to dedicate himself completely to his art and to her, before he dies, he assigns his entire output of pictures. In Nettie, the outcast, "Carlock's pictures have at least found their 'Destination'."

This is in truth a rogue's tale, with the adventure befalling the hero not on the highroad but within the confines of an inexorable tunnel. The skill with which Mr. Craven records what passes within the tunnel, and admits the characters and incidents that conspire to bring out the artist's homelessness and helplessness in "cultured," metropolitan New York is notable: only occasionally does Mr. Craven overstress the prehensile lecheries of Nettie, and only in the final drama of Carlock's death does Mr. Craven roll his hero perhaps too neatly into the ultimate terminal. Mr. Craven's directness in epithet and incident has something of the fine candor of the eighteenth century; but as yet he lacks the seasoned gaiety that would give us a shelf-companion to Tom Jones and Tristram Shandy. For good or ill, Mr. Craven sees the main incidents of the book through the intent and unflickering eyes of Carlock himself; and the detachment necessary to even a Rabelaisian turn of humor is forfeited in the author's absorption.

On the whole, Mr. Craven has told his story with workmanlike skill, in which a maximum effect is obtained with a minimum of verbal effort. Paint has, in fact, the freshness, the directness and irretrievability of an etching: if much is given up by using such a small, copperplate surface to work on, the material that remains is adequately brought out. It is a pleasure to acknowledge Paint as a new contribution to the tightly-drawn type of novel, of which the Life and Death of Harriet Frean is perhaps the outstanding example. Within his circumscribed area, Mr. Craven necessarily makes Carlock and Nettie bulk in the centre of the picture, leaving the other characters to fill the interstices; and yet the effect is that of a complete demonstration. It is easy for the reader to thicken the implications.

While the theme of Paint is inextricably woven into the pattern of the story—so deftly that Paint cannot for a moment be defamed as a "novel with a purpose"—Mr. Craven will perhaps forgive me if I say that the criticism of art and society remains as a sort of solid deposit in the mind even after the taste and tang of the story have departed. In Paint Mr. Craven has not merely satisfied us as a novelist: he has added to his province as a critic: and I cannot think of any recent work in criticism, not even Mr. Craven's own excellent essays, which so admirably poses the difficulties of the genuine artist and genuine art in relation to the modern community.

At the present time, pure art is one of the freest and most servile professions. It is free in the sense that the artist is his own master; that he is not bound to any hieratic prescriptions and rules, beyond such technicalities as he chooses to acquire. Its servility rises out of the fact that art has become "free" and "pure" only by detaching itself from architecture, from interior decoration, from the lesser utilities, like pottery; so that art, divorced from the people at large, who—as Carlock sees—"had no homes and therefore no place for pictures," has become a genteel parasite, pandering more or less adeptly to the tastes of the rich. The artist must, roughly, either prostitute himself by creating petrified inanities that will sell; or he must live off someone who asks nothing in return, except what the artist may be ready to give out of his own bounty and vision. The first path is closed to the genuine artist; what is left is the "American conception—the slimy hermit working in a cave for immortality!"

If the artist achieves anything under the second choice, it is in spite of a deep inferiority complex which acts as a perpetual drain and deterrent upon anything he may set out to do. Mr. Craven is quite right, I think, in making one of Nettie's abiding virtues the fact that she appreciated Carlock, up to the limits of her feelings and intelligence; and Carlock's blind loyalty to this affectionate, loathsome Jezebel, in the face of odium, is quite intelligible: Nettie was in the same relation to Carlock, in the rôle of patron, critic, and public, as a sympathetic community would have been. Nettie is an outcast because she is a prostitute: Carlock is an outcast because he is not a prostitute—this is the fine irony that Mr. Craven tacitly leaves us to ponder. Is it any wonder that art is handled in the metropolis by bland undertakers whose chief services are to embalm and dress the dead? Our interest in an artist rarely manifests itself until defeat and frustration have left their marks upon the artist's character and his work—until the artist's body goes to the cemetery and his spirit to the Museum! Carlock's final bequest to Nettie was justice and wisdom itself: Nettie was still alive! I leave the reader to follow the implications.

LEWIS MUMFORD.

A Correction

In Walton Hamilton's review of The Analysis of the Interchurch World Movement Report on the Steel Strike, in our issue of March 21, page 105, fifteenth line, "enlightened self-interest" should read "unenlightened self-interest."

Contributors

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